



A Submarine Chaser in the Adriatic

BLUE JACKETS OF 1918

BEING THE STORY OF THE WORK OF
THE AMERICAN NAVY IN
THE WORLD WAR

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STORY OF OUR NAVY," "THE STORY OF OUR
ARMY," "SOLDIERS OF THE SEA," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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BLUE JACKETS OF 1918

CHAPTER I

Outbreak of the world war.—Naval unpreparedness of the United States.—Outclassed by Germany.—Popular agitation for a mighty navy.—The German submarine campaign.—Attacks on United States ships.—Contrast between German and British aggressions.—Defense of the British blockade.—Germany's violated promises.—A policy of ruthlessness proclaimed.—The German ambassador given his passports.—The President's appeal to Congress.—Arming the merchant ships.—Culminating German outrages.—The United States declares war.

THE outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 found the United States with a creditable, but not, as later events proved, an adequate navy. As a nation we have never been notable for either military or naval preparedness. With calm self-sufficiency we insist that we are a peaceable people, not given to wars like our fellows beyond seas. This delusion we hug despite the fact that since the adoption of our constitution in 1791 we have fought three wars with considerable foreign powers, and one civil war of unparalleled determination. A war every twenty-five years is about equal to the record of the most militaristic of nations. Between these wars we had our maritime tussle with France, our vigorous naval war with the Barbary powers, our long

drawn-out series of Indian wars, our participation in the expedition against the "Boxers" in China, and our suppression of the Philippine rebellion.

Germany which brandished the mailed fist for nearly half a century had no such record of fighting.

But the idea that we are essentially a peaceful nation has always so ruled the minds of our people that we have never in time of peace prepared for war. After every war we have hurriedly cast off all the trappings and paraphernalia of battle as though eager to be rid of all memorials of an unpleasant job—as a man strips off his working clothes, bathes and puts his tasks out of mind when the day's work is over. It has not seemed a wise policy, but it has brought surprisingly little harm to the nation. When we have been forced unwillingly and unprepared into war our enemy has usually been as unprepared as we, or diplomatic conditions have operated for our protection.

We had virtually no navy in 1861 but neither had the Southern Confederacy. We had a weak navy in 1898, but Spain had a weaker.

In 1914, when war blazed forth in Europe, our navy was ranked by experts as either second or third. Great Britain, whose naval policy had for years been the maintenance of a fleet equal to those of any two continental powers combined, was incomparably first. Whether the United States or Germany came second was at that period a point

of sharp discussion among navy experts. Later developments made it appear that Germany did in fact outclass us in 1914, as her showing in the one serious naval battle of the war—Jutland, May 31, 1916—astonished British naval authorities with the strength of her ships.

But the comparative strength of the navies of Germany and the United States was, after all, a matter of merely academic interest. During the early months of the war it seemed to most of our people that there was little likelihood of the United States being embroiled. And when after the crime of the *Lusitania*, the neutrality of the United States became more and more difficult to maintain, it was evident that the British fleet was quite adequate to hold Germany in check on the sea. Again we owed our safety to some degree to the friendship of a stronger naval power, as we had when Admiral Diederich sought to force conclusions with Admiral Dewey at Manila. But there was too much talk at the moment of the extent of our obligation to Great Britain as a rampart against Germany. It was unpatriotic talk and without sufficient reason. For the American navy of that day, counted ship for ship, and gun for gun, ranked so nearly equal to that of Germany that it was difficult for experts to determine which stood first on paper, while our flag on the ocean stood for an unmarred record of victory which the Germans then could not equal and now may never hope to attain.

Judged by peace standards the navy was effective and creditable. Submitted to war's tests it was at once shown to be lacking in many respects. Indeed that supreme test can seldom be sustained unshaken by any organization. Great Britain's superb fighting force afloat met all the conditions imposed upon it by the war, but from the very first there was constant addition to, patching up and supplementing of the fighting fleet. Our own navy, though it numbered many powerful ships of the first rank, was not what is called by professional critics a "balanced navy." That is to say, while it was strong on the battle line it lacked swift scouts, battle cruisers and auxiliary ships of every kind. Of submarines we had so few, and those of such limited cruising radius, as hardly to entitle us to rank with the great naval powers. In naval aviation we had made hardly a beginning. The personnel of the navy, though of the very highest in respect to professional attainments, was ridiculously inadequate in numbers. Enlistments progressed but slowly despite the endeavors of the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, to make service attractive and profitable even to men determined upon ultimate return to civil life.

The Secretary indeed, during the early years of his administration, was accused of being more concerned with making the service useful as a sort of floating college of trades and handicrafts than with making it an effective fighting navy. His influence in Congress was steadily against larger appropria-

tions and advanced methods which would enhance naval efficiency. Our greatest weakness at the outset of the war was declared by naval experts to proceed from the lack of a general staff, and from the inexperience of fleet commanders in maneuvering large fleets. Against both of these features of naval reorganization Secretary Daniels set his face. It is proper to say that while public condemnation of his position was general in the early days of the war, the record of efficiency made by the navy as the conflict progressed quieted criticism to a great extent.

The earlier situation did not continue without earnest protest from a large and influential section of our citizens. There has always been a strong feeling in support of the navy in the United States, and although it has never been fully reflected in the attitude of the government it has done much to keep our service afloat from actual starvation. The period of our neutrality in the early days of the world war was a time of intense popular agitation for naval expansion. The government at Washington was anything but responsive. It is not unfair to say of President Wilson and Secretary Daniels that they lagged far behind public sentiment in recognition of the need for a mighty navy. The Secretary, in particular, seemed to resent any question of the adequacy of his force as a criticism of himself, and devoted more energy to denunciation and defiance of his critics than to efforts to correct the evils of which they complained, and for which

it is just to say he was not originally responsible. A glaring illustration of this tendency was his attack upon the Navy League which showed only too convincingly that he was willing to destroy one of the greatest influences for the upbuilding of the navy simply because certain of its officials refused to slavishly support his personal policies.

Public men can be judged fairly only by their public utterances. Nothing in the attitude or expressions of responsible members of the Wilson administration indicates that they felt at the beginning of the war the slightest apprehension that we might be dragged into the conflict, or that such apprehension was felt by them up to November, 1916, when they successfully sought the re-election of the President on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." Clinging to this belief it was natural that they should long oppose the agitation of those who worked for a bigger navy in the conviction that it would be needed.

There was in the United States from the first a small body of citizens who thought our entrance upon the war was necessary and just. They believed that the cynical repudiation of the "scrap of paper," and the invasion of Belgium constituted a menace to orderly and peace-loving communities the world over. Their numbers were increased when the Germans, after arrogantly publishing in New York newspapers an advertisement of their purpose to commit wholesale murder, did in fact torpedo the British liner, *Lusitania*, May 7, 1915,

drowning 1,198 passengers, of whom 114 were American citizens. Three hundred and eighty women and children were drowned, of whom 94 were babes in arms.

Although those who thus early advocated the participation of the United States in the great struggle were comparatively few in numbers their influence was far-reaching. They made up the greater part of what in Europe would be called "the intellectuals" of the nation, and their facilities for expressing their convictions were of the first order. Along with their insistence that national honor and national safety alike demanded our resistance to German militarism and aggression, went constant propaganda for the increase of the navy. And as the ranks of the war party were increased by every new German submarine outrage involving American lives or interests, it grew fast and the demand for a mighty navy grew with it.

By a strange paradox the submarine, which was Germany's only effective naval weapon, proved her final undoing. It alone, after the British navy had swept the seas clear of German surface ships made the name of the Hun feared along the ocean passages and traffic lanes. But it was the ruthless and unlawful use of the submarine that finally brought the United States into the war, and set the final stamp of defeat upon Germany in the bloody battles of the Argonne and the Meuse.

A brief account of the German submarine cam-

paign, in so far as it affected American rights, will explain why this nation, devoted as it was to peace, was finally forced into the war.

February 1, 1917, the German government formally declared that it would henceforward abandon all restraint due to international law and wage submarine war ruthlessly, and without regard for what had been regarded as the accepted law of nations. Prior to that time, while professing to be deferring to international law and the principles of humanity, the Germans had sunk no fewer than eleven American ships and caused the death of more than two hundred citizens of the United States who were exercising their undoubted right to travel on the high seas. The neutrality of the ship attacked was a matter of the least concern to the Huns. The *Nebraskan* had her name painted in on her sides in letters six feet high when the German torpedo found her. The *Leelanaw* was boarded by a crew which was satisfied of her nationality before sinking her. Most of the American lives lost, however, were those of passengers or seamen on foreign ships, usually of belligerent registry. In such cases the protest of the United States government was based not upon the sinking of the ship, for that was within Germany's right as a belligerent, but upon sinking without warning and without opportunity being given to non-combatants to make their escape. Such notice and such warnings are provided for in the codes of international law to which, prior to Germany's

assault upon civilization, all nations had given their respect.

The Germans defended their acts upon the plea that they were restricted by the overpowering might of the British navy to the use of the submarine in maintaining any power whatsoever on the seas. Underwater vessels while terrible in stealthy offense are weak and fragile in defense. If one paused to board a suspected vessel, fix her nationality and give her crew time to take to the boats, there was always the possibility that a wireless call might bring up a destroyer which would put an end to the submarine in the midst of its work. To this plea the response of the United States was that the rules of international law were fixed and known to all nations. They could not be amended to suit the convenience of Germany as naval conditions forced upon her the use of new engines of war.

Month after month the record of sinkings without warning was strung out, and each time American lives were lost a new note from the State Department called attention to the lengthening list of Americans sacrificed to the war lust of a nation with which we were nominally at peace. The strategy of German diplomacy was evasive and dilatory—plentiful of promises but disappointing in performance. The soft words of Ambassador von Bernstorff and the German chancellery were more than offset by the brutality of the U-boats on the ocean.

The first American ship to feel the shock of a German torpedo was the tanker *Gulflight*, which though badly injured by the explosion was towed crippled into port. The captain of a British trawler who witnessed the attack wrote this account of it:

“We had shot our nets, and about noon we saw a large tank steamer coming up channel at a good pace. She was coming in our direction, and I soon saw her colors, the Stars and Stripes, at the stern—a fine big ensign it was and spread out like a board. When she was about two miles off, to my horror, I saw a submarine emerge from the depths and come right to the surface. There was no sign of life on the submarine, but she lay stationary, rising and falling in the trough, and I knew instinctively that she was watching the steamer. She had undoubtedly come in the same direction as that in which the steamer was going, and it did not take me long to realize what had actually happened. I took in the situation at a glance. The submarine had passed the *Gulflight* (for that proved to be her name). She had deliberately increased her speed to lay in wait for her prey and get a sure target, rather than attempt to fire a torpedo when overhauling her with the possible chance of missing and wasting one of those expensive weapons even on an American.

“The submarine was painted light gray and had two guns; but I could not see any number. For five minutes she lay motionless—and then having fixed the position of her prey, and taken her speed into consideration, she slowly submerged in its direction. I knew what was coming, and it came,—a dull heavy explosion and a silence. And then as if to see the result of her handiwork the subma-

rine again appeared. She did not stay up long, as smoke was seen on the horizon, and I knew the patrols had been looking for her. She knew it too, and submerged. I hauled in my nets and proceeded at full speed to the sinking ship to try and save the lives of the crew. Our boat was launched and we went aboard. By this time the *Gulflight's* bows were down and she looked as if she would sink at any minute. She was badly holed in the front part. The Huns I thought had done their work well.

"Ten minutes later I saw the patrol vessels coming up for all they were worth, and one of these vessels took off the crew, two of whom were drowned. The Captain of the *Gulflight* died of shock."

It was the contention of the Germans that if time were given to the passengers and crew to take to their small boats all the provisions of international law had been complied with. But the precise measure of safety enjoyed by people crowded into open boats four hundred miles from shore, as often happened, tossed on a wintry sea, perhaps with insufficient provision of food and water is not easy to estimate. And as the war went on the Germans added to these perils by using the helpless boats as targets for shell-fire and even ran them down for mere lust of murder.

An illustration of the German method of dealing with the helpless survivors of a torpedoed ship was furnished by the case of the *Ticonderoga* which was left behind by her convoy in September of 1918 and fell a speedy prey to a U-boat. She was armed but

was able to make but slight resistance. A survivor told the story thus:

"Our guns did not fire more than five or six shots, so quickly did the shells from the submarine strike down both guns and their crews. The forward gun was shot away nearly at once, as the submarine was not more than a mile away and kept coming nearer, and the after gun and its crew were as quickly done for. The men went to the boats but it was no use, as the flying shrapnel was spraying the decks, and men fell by scores either dead or badly wounded.

"All of the eight boats were riddled with the flying fragments of shell with the exception of one, and this, the only one fit to put over was filled with men. One raft also was got away and all the time the Hun commander did not slacken his shell-fire.

"Finally in desperation one man overboard swam to the side of the submarine, which was less than a quarter of a mile away, firing almost point blank at us, and hailed an officer, asking him in God's name to stop. The Lieutenant who answered pointed a revolver at him saying that if he did not swim back he would shoot him.

"When our boat had only seventeen in it we were ordered along side and made to tie up while the shelling of the dead and dying on the sinking ship kept up. Questions were put to the leader of our boat which he refused to answer and suddenly the submarine submerged, and only the parting of the rope by which we were tied fast to the U-boat prevented our going down with it."

In October, 1916, an event occurred in the waters off Nantucket that tested sorely the discipline and patience of our blue jackets, and that fairly en-

raged the rapidly increasing war party in the United States. We had already had one visit to our ports of a German submarine, the *Deutschland*. This vessel was unarmed and while she brought over and carried back valuable cargoes and important dispatches on each of her voyages it seems probable that the chief purpose of her visits was to hint to the United States that, in the event of war, our coasts were not wholly beyond the effective range of the Kaiser's undersea boats. This fact was the more vigorously impressed upon us when one bright October morning the sailors on the light-ship at Brenton's Reef, at the entrance to Newport harbor, picked up a submarine steaming toward them from open sea. The spectacle for the moment aroused no especial interest, for Newport was then a station for United States submarines, and although we had not enough of these stingarees to count much in a real war they did occasionally show themselves off the harbor's mouth. But when on closer approach this craft broke out the red, black and white flag of Germany the light-ship men signaled excitedly to shore.

The visitor was the armed submarine *U-53*, Captain Hans Rose. We were still at peace with Germany—though in all our navy there were not a handful of officers who did not expect, and hope, soon to be at war with her—and accordingly the usual courtesies were exchanged between the visitors and the officers of our naval station. Captain Rose was most courteous and debonair. As the

phrase has it, "butter would not melt in his mouth." Afterwards he said that the American officers seemed embarrassed. Had he said they seemed suspicious he would have come nearer to describing their emotions.

After spending the daylight hours in port, the *U-53* put out to sea. Early the next morning the wireless began bringing messages that explained her errand and that, perhaps, made the Newport naval men who had extended grudging courtesy to her commander regret that they had been forced to be courteous at all.

First, the captain of an American steamship complained that he had been compelled to heave-to and show his papers to the German commander. Then came the news that the British steamship, *West Point*, had been sunk off Nantucket. Thereafter news of like character kept coming in throughout the day. The *Strathdean*, flying the British flag, had been sunk and twenty of her crew had been taken on the Nantucket light-ship. The *Stephano*, a liner bound from New York to Halifax with Americans aboard, had met a like fate. Her passengers and crew, 144 people in all, were set adrift in small boats, forty-two miles from land. A Dutch and a Norwegian freighter were dealt with in the same fashion. In all 216 human beings were set adrift in open boats by the raider without compunction. That no lives were sacrificed was due to the swift dispatch by Admiral Knight of the Newport destroyer flotilla to the scene immediately

upon learning what was going on in Nantucket Sound. Fourteen of the long, low, lean racers sped out to sea while the crowds that lined the shore cheered their departure—and would have cheered even more lustily had the errand been one of vengeance.

It was no pleasant task which the Yankee officers and men had to discharge on that October day. The scene of the German's activity was far out at sea, beyond the three-mile limit, within which the sovereignty of the United States was confined by international law. The victims flew foreign flags—British, Dutch and Norwegian. It is true that two of these were flags of nations which, like the United States, were at the moment neutral. But our navy had no authority to defend other neutrals. We were at peace with Germany. To have interfered with the vandal occupation of *U-53* would have been an act of war. There was nothing for our men to do but to watch with ill-concealed wrath while one after the other the unarmed ships went down before the missiles of the Hun. The destroyer *Balch* was first on the scene, and to her commander fell the most trying lot of all. His appeals to Washington by wireless went unanswered, and his only opportunity to get even with the Hun was when he curtly, and profanely, refused to shift the position of his ship in order that the work of destruction might be prosecuted more conveniently.

It cannot be said that our government showed

any undue haste in resenting either the outrages upon its citizens, or the affronts to its dignity upon the high seas. Note followed note in dignified but too deliberate fashion from our State Department. The Germans in response promised amendment of their ways, but continually demanded that, as the price of their obedience to international law, the United States should force Great Britain to mitigate the severity of the blockade which was bringing heavy privations upon the German people. In this policy they were aided by the German propagandists in the United States, and by politicians who thought they saw profit to themselves in "twisting the British lion's tail." Unquestionably there was some ground on which to complain of the British blockade. It caused some natural irritation in the United States, which the friends of Germany did their best to fan into actual hostility between the two Anglo-Saxon nations. Our perfectly legitimate commerce with Germany was virtually destroyed. Our mails were delayed and made uncertain. Certain of our ships, or neutral ships carrying cargoes owned by Americans, were seized and held for months subject to the action of British prize courts. That some of these ships were actually owned by Germans, or by German sympathizers, and were sent out to provoke the British into some indefensible violation of the principles of neutrality was undeniably true. But even with these cases ignored there was enough of the heavy hand in the British enforcement of rule upon the



A Modern Type of American Destroyer, Ready for Business

sea to have stung the United States into something more than diplomatic protest had not the enormity of Germany's barbarity in Belgium estranged American sympathy from the start, and the crime of the *Lusitania* made any sort of interposition that might be helpful to the Huns unthinkable.

Moreover the blockade is recognized as a legitimate weapon of war, and is one which the United States, in the Civil War, employed with an unflinching determination not outdone by Great Britain in the World War. The new methods which seemed revolutionary were plainly compelled and made legitimate by new conditions. The submarine made impossible that simple form of blockade which had been enforced by men of war hovering about the entrance to an enemy's harbor. The blockade had to be kept far out at sea, and great zones established within which neutral ships were held subject to search and seizure. Moreover, goods shipped to neutral countries adjacent to the enemy's territory were often found to be for enemy use. It was vital to the success of the blockade that this form of evasion should be checked. Denmark, Holland and the Scandinavian countries enjoyed practically uninterrupted communication with Germany, and the exports of the United States to these countries leaped to gigantic figures as the blockade closed the German ports. Interference with ostensibly legitimate shipments to these countries led to extreme irritation in both the country of the shipper and that of the consignee. But here

again the United States was stopped from effective protest by the record of its own blockading practice in the Civil War. At that period the British port of Nassau in the Bahamas, and the Mexican town of Matamoras were the favorite points to which goods were shipped with the Confederacy for their ultimate destination. But the federal cruisers never hesitated to seize ships and cargoes engaged in this traffic and our own courts declared the seizures lawful. The ship carrying the goods to the neutral port and the blockade runner taking them thence to the enemy port were described by a United States judge as "planks of the same bridge."

This doctrine was maintained by Great Britain in her regulation of shipping bound to Dutch, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian ports. Germany protested bitterly. In their response to the protests of the United States against unlawful submarine aggressions the German diplomats constantly declared British blockading methods unlawful, and demanded that our government apply to them the same strict scrutiny to which it subjected German endeavors to break the blockade by submarine attack. But their protests availed nothing.

If all other considerations were set aside, if German methods of warfare had not so outraged the American sense of humanity, and if the instinctive unity of the English-speaking peoples had been a weaker bond, still the fact that German

submarine warfare took the lives of our people while the British blockade only imperiled their profits, which might be recovered later, made the German effort to offset the former by the latter futile.

At one time it appeared that the protests of our State Department had been effective. The German government solemnly undertook to attack no more liners without due warning, and time to put passengers and crew in safety. Looking back upon the temper of the time, after the lapse of years, it seems doubtful whether, had this promise been faithfully kept, it would have averted the entrance of the United States upon the war. And it seems much more doubtful whether the failure of the United States to go to the aid of the allied nations in their war upon German autocracy and militarism would have been a fortunate thing either for this country or the world at large.

That, however, is mere futile speculation. The actual happening was that Germany repudiated the agreement precisely as she had repudiated the treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium. Late in January of 1917 she proclaimed to the world that, beginning February 1st, her submarine warfare would be ruthless, restrained no longer by any consideration for neutral opinion or the rules of international law, and that she would "meet the illegal measures of her enemies by forcibly preventing in a zone around Great Britain, France, Italy and in the eastern Mediterranean all naviga-

tion, that of neutrals included, and to England from and to France, etc. All ships met within that zone will be sunk."

Defiant as it was of civilized opinion the world over, and certain as it was to bring the United States into the war, this action on the part of Germany was probably the only course left to her. It was a counsel of desperation indeed, but her case was desperate. If she had adopted it a year earlier there is, as we shall see later in the course of this narrative, every probability that she would have won the war. On the surface of the seas Great Britain was invincible. On land the gallant armies of France, Britain and Belgium though often sorely pressed and even for the moment defeated in battle, were nevertheless holding the enemy in check and probably could have done so until the time of German exhaustion. But the British Isles were the vulnerable point of the British Empire. Densely populated, and with agriculture neglected for more than a century while the land was held fallow for the purposes of sport, they could no longer raise food sufficient for the support of their people. It was the saying at the outset of the war that England was never more than three weeks away from starvation. Though possibly an exaggeration the phrase did express substantially the precarious state of England if the steady stream of ships bringing food to her people from the ends of the earth should be stopped.

This was what the Germans undertook to do with

their submarine campaign. Their statisticians estimated that sinking a million tons a month of ships bound for the British Isles would starve England into subjection. They never quite attained that figure, but even falling short of it they had made much progress toward their end when the interposition of the American navy blocked their submarine campaign and saved England. Had they had a year in which to pursue the policy of ruthlessness instead of only a few months the story of the world might not have read as it does today.

February 3rd the President appeared before Congress in joint session and reported that the passports of the German ambassador, Count von Bernstorff, had been sent him and the American ambassador to Berlin, James W. Gerard, had been recalled. The President still professed "inveterate confidence on his [my] part in the sobriety and prudent foresight" of Germany's purposes, but announced his intention, should that confidence prove misplaced, of coming to Congress "to ask that authority be given me to use any means that may be necessary for the protection of our seamen and our people in the prosecution of their peaceful and legitimate errands on the high seas."

How far the President's "inveterate confidence" was justified was shown by the fact that in the first eighteen days of February the Germans sunk 117 ships with a tonnage of 245,140. Of these, seven were American ships and between twenty-five and

thirty American lives were lost. In order that they might sink their million tons of ships a month and reduce England to abject surrender through starvation, the German rulers were perfectly willing to risk provoking the United States into entrance upon the war. Indeed it was evident that they scorned this nation's armed power, knowing that we had no army and not believing for a moment that we could create one and ferry it across three thousand miles of ocean in season to have any effect upon the fortunes of the war. Developments after the war showed that this was the conviction of the Kaiser and his closest advisers.

In the first fury of the ruthless campaign American interests suffered severely. On February 3rd, the *U-53* sunk the American steamship *Housatonic*, and on the 13th the schooner *Lyman M. Law* met a similar fate. An American missionary went down with the French steamer, *Athos*, near Malta. Two American women, Mrs. Mary E. Hoy and her daughter, died miserably in an open boat after the sinking of the Cunard liner, *Laconia*, February 27th. The story of the sufferings of these women, as told by the Rev. Dunstan Sargent, throws a bright light upon the German contention that life-boats were "a place of safety" as contemplated by international law:

"Mrs. Hoy died in the arms of her daughter. Her body slipped off into the sea out of her daughter's weakened arms. The heart-broken daughter succumbed a few

minutes afterward, and her body fell over the side of the boat as we were tossed by the icy waves.

"In icy water, up to her knees for two hours, the daughter all the time bravely supported her aged mother, uttering words of encouragement to her. From the start both were violently seasick, which, coupled with the cold and exposure, gradually wore down their courage. Both were brave women.

"The first to die in our boat was Irvine Robinson, of Toronto. After his body had been consigned to the sea we tossed about for an hour getting more and more water until the gunwales were almost level with the sea. Then Cedric P. Ivatt, of London, who was not physically strong, succumbed in the arms of his fiancée, who was close beside him, trying in vain to keep him warm by throwing her wealth of hair about his neck."

The sinking of the *Laconia* was the climax of German aggression. Floyd Gibbons, a remarkably able and gallant correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*, who was aboard the ship, and wrote a most graphic cable account of her destruction, says that as he stepped ashore from the small boat in which he had been saved an English friend who had been on the ship met him and slapped him on the shoulder with the remark, "Well, old Casus Belli, is this your blooming overt act?"

That is precisely what it proved to be, although it did not immediately result in the declaration of war that it made inevitable. The indomitable purpose of the administration to keep out of war still controlled. Another act in the comedy of delay and vacillation had yet to be played.

President Wilson had, on February 26, 1917, asked of Congress authority to arm merchant ships. The session was drawing to a close and a little group of pacifist senators, by the methods of the filibuster, prevented action on the resolution before adjournment. However, the President proceeded to arm the ships nevertheless by executive act. The task of providing guns and gunners fell upon the navy and was no light undertaking. The guns used were from four to six-inch caliber, two to each ship, mounted bow and stern. These guns had, of course, to be taken from ships of the regular navy, and the need was immediate for their early replacement as the drift of the nation toward war was only too apparent. But while the supply of guns was strictly limited, that of gunners was even more so. The navy could not be stripped of its trained men, and indeed the number of men who could be trusted to make a winning shot at a periscope four inches in diameter at a distance of a mile or more was decidedly small. In the end the bulk of each gun's crew was made up of men from the naval training schools ashore—land lubbers still, but in the way of becoming sailors. The petty officers in command, chief gunner's mates, boatswain's mates and masters at arms were veterans taken from the fleet. As a matter of fact the arming of our merchant ships was chiefly valuable for its moral effect on the enemy. While there were many rumors of pitched battles between ships thus armed and submarines the official records contain

no case of a U-boat actually destroyed by merchant gunners. But the fact that our ships were known to be armed compelled caution on the part of the enemy. He could no longer come boldly to the surface and destroy his prey with shell-fire, for the guns on the merchantmen were as heavy as those carried by the average submarine. He was therefore compelled to use his torpedoes, which could be discharged without coming to the surface. But these were expensive weapons, and the number allotted to the average submarine was only from ten to twelve. When they were exhausted he was compelled to return to his home port for more. This, rather than his supply of gasoline, fixed the cruising radius of the U-boat, and any device or system which compelled the Hun to exhaust his supply of torpedoes greatly lessened the menace of his submarine campaign. It was in accomplishing this, rather than in victories gained in actual battle, that the arming of the merchant ships proved effective. But the men hastily called to this service speedily became real blue jackets. The gun's crew of the *Acteon*, sunk by torpedo off Cape Finisterre in November, 1917, worked their way without a commissioned officer, and without a compass in a small open boat, for eleven days, finally making the coast of Spain with three men dead and all nearly exhausted.

While the work of arming the ships went on and the nation hung hesitant on the brink of war, the German propaganda went on apace, even though

the Ambassador had been sent about his business. The German government had set up the doctrine that any merchant ship that attempted self-defense became thereby a pirate, and her officers and crew, if captured, were not prisoners of war but were subject to the death penalty for piracy. In one case, that of the British Captain Fryatt, who ran down a U-boat and was subsequently captured, this penalty was actually inflicted. German propagandists so worked upon the sympathies and fears of Congress that a resolution warning American citizens against traveling upon armed merchantmen of their own nationality narrowly escaped passage by the Senate. Its passage would have been an act of national poltroonery, for while a nation is itself at peace its people have a right to travel where they will on the high seas in vessels flying their flag. To curtail this right is to admit the impotence of the flag to protect them.

The period immediately following the proclamation of ruthless submarine warfare was one of deep mortification to those Americans who had been proud of their country's record upon the sea and were hopeful of seeing its past glories eclipsed in the future. Our ships clung to our ports like chickens to the mother hen when the hawk's shadow falls black upon the barnyard. The German threat, plus the delay of our own government in furnishing arms and arranging for marine insurance had the effect of a blockade. Mails to Europe went forth only when a British ship was

prepared to carry them. Germany had patronizingly offered to permit one American ship, displaying colors designed by Germans, to sail once a week, along a specified course to a British port selected by the enemy. The offer, which was characteristically German in its arrogance, enraged every red-blooded American who read it. But there was long and maddening delay before we made the only suitable retort—that of sending our ships when and where wished. After this action was taken *London Punch* printed a cartoon which was balm to those of our people who had chafed under our long and supine inactivity. The Kaiser was depicted as saying haughtily to Uncle Sam, “You may go once a week to Falmouth.” To which the latter, hands in pockets and cigar at a defiant angle retorts, “And you may go, all the time, to hell!”

There was real enthusiasm on the water fronts when, on February 10th, two American ships, the *Orleans* and the *Rochester*, sailed, unarmed, in defiance of the German threat. Both arrived in safety at their French destinations and were warmly welcomed. March 12th the *Campania*, first of the armed merchantmen sailed, and thereafter our ships went out with saucy rifled cannon peering over their quarters as fast as the guns and gunners could be found. One of the earliest was the *Aztec*, which was torpedoed at dead of night. Her people realized that the Germans would make special efforts to get the earliest of the American armed ships, and her gunners were steadily on the

alert. One submarine was sighted by day and speedily submerged when its captain caught sight, through his conning tower, of the guns on the merchantmen being trained on his frail craft. But when the fatal blow was dealt the gunners had no chance to use their weapons and the ship had no chance for its life.

The *Aztec* was running at full speed, through a dark night, with all lights out. Now while it is easy to say "all lights out" it is harder to enforce such a condition. The work of the ship must go on below with lights burning. The best that can be done is to exercise all possible vigilance to see that no port is opened by the merest crack. It is amazing to a landsman to know how far the slightest gleam of light is visible at sea. During the war it was discovered by actual test that the red coal on the end of a lighted cigar was visible for more than a mile. Once a ship's printer, working late at night, opened his port for just an instant to get a whiff of fresh air. As luck would have it a German submarine was in the vicinity, saw the gleam and let slip a torpedo that destroyed the ship.

It was some such momentary relaxation of complete caution that led to the *Aztec's* end. About 9.30 at night the chief engineer noticed that the light in the wireless cabin was not completely obscured and went thither to warn the operator. The two men were standing near the rail talking about the matter, and wondering whether any evil would come of it. At that very moment a torpedo

struck the rail immediately below them. The seaman was thrown high in air, falling into the sea and was never again seen. The wireless operator was thrown nearly thirty feet, and a sailor standing near had his head blown off. Though badly wounded the wireless man recovered consciousness and ran to the wireless room with the intention of sending out an S.O.S. appeal. But the apparatus was too badly wrecked. It was evident that the ship was lost and the order was given to abandon her. The sea was running high and the first lifeboat lowered was broken against the ship's side and the seven men in it thrown into the sea. A second boat got away safely. The ship meantime was sinking rapidly. The boat assigned to the crew of naval gunners aboard was the last to leave the vessel, taking in it the captain and the navy lieutenant in command of the gun's crew. But this craft scarcely got clear of the ship when the *Aztec* sank. It had been less than seven minutes since the torpedo had found its mark.

Of all on the ship only the six in the last boat were rescued, they being picked up by the French patrol boat, *Jeanne d'Arc*. Among the men lost was John Eopolucci, a boatswain's mate of the United States navy and the first man of our armed service to lose his life in the war.

It was not until after the United States had actually declared war that the first exchange of shots between the navy crew of an armed merchantman and a German U-boat occurred. The Ameri-

can was the armed freighter *Mongolian*, Captain Emery Rice. One six-inch gun and two of four inches each, with crews of blue jackets under command of Lieutenant Bruce Ware, U.S.N., guarded the ship against Germany's underwater prowlers as she steamed sturdily through the seas towards Liverpool. The war zone reached, the watch was redoubled. From every top and from the peak of the bow keen-eyed men peered out across the sea under which deadly peril was known to lurk. When within twenty-four hours of port, at half-past five in the afternoon, the lookout's voice rang out:

"Submarine! Two points off the port bow!"

Almost dead ahead a periscope was thrust up above the surface of the water like a king cobra poised to strike. The submarine was evidently waiting for its victim to reach a more favorable position before launching its thunderbolt. But whether the watcher at the periscope could see the guns, or instinctively sensed his danger, he waited no longer. As the blue jackets, responsive to the call of their commander, sprang to their guns the periscope sank slowly out of sight. The ship leaped forward as the engineers put on full speed, and tore through the water over the spot where the spying tube had vanished, but no shock told of striking the lurking hull beneath. The German, however, was plucky. He had no thought of abandoning the prey he had marked down. Soon a shout from a lookout called attention to the periscope breaking

water about one thousand yards directly abeam. This time Fritz was in a most advantageous position to let fly his deadly charge. But he was not given time. Almost instantly the six-inch gun spoke out and the periscope flew into splinters. A great fountain of water rose into the air where the eye of the German recently had been, and broad, slick patches of oil spread out over the waves. There was no doubt about the hit, but the *Mongolian* did not stop to verify it. In accordance with regulations she fled that neighborhood with all possible speed. But that she did in fact destroy the enemy has been generally conceded, and the frequency with which the same ship was attacked in her later voyages suggests that the Germans recognized in her a successful enemy and were bent on revenge.

The affair of the *Mongolian* occurred subsequent to the declaration of war, and it happened that prior to that declaration no actual combat between the armed merchantmen and the German U-boats took place. But the very fact that the ocean swarmed with our ships, armed by regular navy forces and ready to defend themselves made war inevitable. The President and his spokesmen talked peace, but every department of the government was getting ready for the inevitable conflict. The actual declaration was forced, not by an attack upon an American ship but by the destruction of foreign ships upon which the lives of American passengers were lost. In one day, March 19, 1918,

three large American ships, *City of Memphis*, *Illinois* and the *Vigilancia* were torpedoed and sunk—though we were still at peace with Germany. Between the notice of the beginning of the ruthless submarine campaign and the 5th of April, between twenty-five and thirty American lives were lost to German attack. As the report of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs phrased it: "This is war. War waged by the Imperial German government upon this country and its people."

There was never a government more reluctant to declare war. The President had just been elected after a campaign in which stress had been laid upon his endeavors for the maintenance of peace. A majority of both houses of Congress was of his party, and held opinions in accord with his views. But German aggressions seemed to leave no opportunity for a peaceful settlement. At the time Americans wondered at the fatuity which led the Teutonic powers, in this critical moment, to fairly nag this nation into war. To us the outcome of our entrance upon the struggle seemed the inevitable defeat of Germany even when allowance was made for the unavoidable delay which must precede our actual participation in battle.

The Hun, however, was not so rash or arrogant as superficially appeared. His generals were able, better than we, to estimate the stubbornness of the defense of the allies on land, and the staying qualities of their own troops. The world learned, after the peace when the memoirs of von Tirpitz, Luden-

dorff and other great figures in Germany were published, that notwithstanding great successes on land the Germans had come to despair of conclusive victory there. Their allies were weakening, the relentless blockade was breaking down the health and destroying the morale of their people at home, and the obstinacy of the resistance of the Allies gave effect on every front to the slogan of the French at Verdun—"They shall not pass!"

So they looked to the sea. On its surface they were impotent. The British had swept their merchant fleet from the face of the waters, and now held their men-of-war remorselessly penned in their fortified harbors. But under water Germany was supreme. Prevision to some extent, but even more hurried construction enforced and stimulated by war conditions, had placed her first among submarine powers. But great as was her underwater fleet it counted for little in actual warfare. After the first stroke of Weddigen, by which three British cruisers were sunk in a scant two hours, the submarines accomplished little against the British navy. But the fact that the British Isles were dependent for food upon ships coming from all parts of the world did seem to open an opportunity to win victory with the submarine. Could Britain be starved into subjection the whole alliance would fall. If the submarines could sink enough ships Britain would be starved. If they could be sunk within a brief enough time the United States could

not make preparations for an effective entrance upon the war, and in that event with the British fleet surrendered to Germany she need not fear the United States.

Such was the cold logic which led to Germany's flouting the United States and compelling our entrance upon the war. In a later chapter I shall show how nearly accurate were the German computations, and how close their submarine campaign came to accomplishing all that was claimed for it. But the first thing it did accomplish was the enrollment of the United States among Germany's determined foes for on the night of April 6, 1917, the Congress declared war existing with but a few dissentient votes in Senate and House.

The words with which the President closed his appeal for such action must ever stand as expressing the sentiment and the purpose of the American people in its entrance upon this conflict:

"It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free

peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

“To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured.

“God helping her she can do no other.”

CHAPTER II

Preparing for war.—The task confronting the nation.—Our normal unpreparedness.—The Mexican episode.—The voyage of the destroyers.—“Ready now, Sir!”—Manning the navy.—The great training camps.—The mosquito fleet.

HAVING declared war the United States took up in grim earnest the task of waging it. There were not lacking among our people those who disbelieved that we could do Germany much harm. People said scoffingly that, under existing conditions, a war between Germany and the United States would be like a duel which Abraham Lincoln once suggested for two quarreling politicians—“with axes at forty-five yards distance.”

The task of raising, arming, drilling and transporting an army big enough to take rank with the forces of the embattled nations seemed to many impossible of accomplishment in season to affect the result. The German people believed implicitly that this was true. The German government, though perhaps not quite so confident, nevertheless hoped that the United States had come in too late. At the moment the war on land gave every indication of being a stalemate, and the Germans believed that if the United States had, in fact, come in too tardily for its troops to turn that deadlock into an allied victory, the German submarines would starve England into subjection.

The destructive work of these sinister engines of destruction had by this time, in fact, become more menacing than the general public suspected. The British Admiralty knew it and sedulously concealed the facts from the world lest black despair seize upon the Allies. The German Admiralty likewise knew it, and loudly and exultantly proclaimed their impending triumph, but the world opposed to them repudiated their statistics and derided their claims. After the war had ended in victory for the Allies, Admiral Sims, U.S.N., who had been sent to England by the President when our entanglement became inevitable, told of the gloomy apprehensions of the British in a series of articles published in *World's Work*. He was talking with Admiral Lord Jellicoe the day of his arrival in London:

“‘Yes,’ Jellicoe said as quietly as though he were discussing the weather, and not the future of the British Empire, ‘it is impossible for us to go on with the war if these losses continue.’

“‘What are you doing about it?’ I asked.

“‘Everything that we can. We are increasing our anti-submarine forces in every possible way. We are using every possible craft we can find with which to fight submarines. We are building destroyers, trawlers and other like craft as fast as we can. But the situation is very serious and we shall need all the help we can get.’

“‘It looks as though the Germans were winning the war,’ I remarked.

“‘They will win unless we can stop these losses, and stop them soon,’ the Admiral replied.”

This discouraging outlook was kept carefully secret in naval circles and the work of developing our navy in order to meet the great emergency was pressed with the utmost vigor. It was perhaps not altogether fortunate that the American people were not informed as to the gravity of the situation at the time it was existing, for knowledge then might have impressed them with the folly of a governmental policy which failed to keep the nation at all times provided with a navy adequate to its own defense.

We had no such navy at the moment, although we were on the brink of war with Germany. Suppose the German anticipations—which Lord Jellicoe admitted were not wholly baseless—had been realized. England facing starvation would have been forced to surrender. The very first demand—and an eminently proper demand under the circumstances—on the part of Germany would have been for the surrender of the British navy. Possessed of that enormous force, in addition to her own fleet, and with a quarrel with the United States ready to hand, what more natural than that Germany should attempt to recoup some of her enormous war expenditures by a raid on this country? Such an adventure, viewed now in the light of history, had every chance of success. Not all the expenditures that could be made in the course of a century on a mighty navy would equal the tribute which an enemy fleet could exact if it had our Atlantic seaboard at its mercy for one month. That the

peril was so narrowly averted in 1918 affords every reason why this nation should prevent, at any cost, its possible recurrence.

The immediate duty at that time, however, was to make up for past neglect by building up the navy to effective proportions. To this end every governmental energy was exerted, every resource of men and money employed. Fortunately a start had been made for the growing menace of German aggression, and the persistent agitation of friends of the navy had led Congress in 1916 to make the largest appropriation for naval purposes ever made by any legislature in time of peace. For the first time a continuing building programme, to extend over a term of three years, was established. In all, 157 vessels were provided for, 10 being battleships, 6 battle cruisers, 50 destroyers, 9 fleet submarines, 58 coast submarines and 13 auxiliaries. Great as these provisions were, and large as was the increase in personnel called for by the law, it was all outdone by our naval development after war had actually been declared.

It is pertinent to note here, as illustrative of the difficulty of creating a navy in haste, that none of the capital ships authorized by this law was finished in time to serve in the war upon Germany.

Even before this congressional recognition of the growing need for a larger navy the men of the service afloat had a chance to experience real action, hot while it lasted, but happily brief.

During the first year of the World War there was

trouble in Mexico. There has always been trouble in Mexico since the time of Diaz, and there are many who think that there always will be trouble there until the United States takes control of that turbulent people. By 1914 a series of revolutions had resulted in making a picturesque old Indian, Victoriano Huerta, provisional president of a so-called republic which was in fact a military dictatorship.

Huerta had never been recognized by the United States. President Wilson had declined to extend the right hand of official fellowship to one whose hand was stained with the blood of his predecessor, and whose rule was founded upon assassination. Naturally Huerta and his Mexican supporters were aggrieved. With them political assassination was not taken so seriously as in Washington. The Mexican ruler showed his resentment by studied affronts to the United States, and his followers manifested theirs by mobbing our citizens, and especially our seamen, whenever opportunity offered. Sailors from our ships in Mexican ports were insulted and attacked. At Tampico the paymaster of the U.S.S. *Dolphin*, with his boat's crew was arrested and marched publicly through the streets to the calaboose. At Vera Cruz an orderly in full uniform, sent ashore for the ship's mail, was likewise arrested. The President finally determined to take cognizance of what could only be construed as a policy of deliberate insult, and accordingly demanded an apology and a salute to the

flag. The latter Huerta refused to grant—incidentally it may be noted that it never was granted—and the North Atlantic fleet was sent to Vera Cruz.

The whole naval programme in the operations that followed was carried out with a celerity which spoke highly for the efficiency of the service. Within eighteen hours of the issuance of the orders the vessels of the fleet were steaming out of the various Atlantic stations to rendezvous at sea, with the *Arkansas* as Admiral Badger's flagship. At the Newport training station one thousand men were ready to leave for Mexico fifteen minutes after the receipt of the telegraphed orders. One battleship took in 1,800 tons of coal, provisions for one thousand men for six weeks, all other necessary supplies, rounded up officers and men ashore on leave and was ready to sail in twelve hours.

A German ship, loaded with supplies for Huerta, was known to be on the way to Vera Cruz. While the United States was at peace with both Mexico and Germany, the relations between the countries were decidedly strained. It was not desirable that Huerta should receive another large supply of arms and ammunition. On the other hand to seize the ship would add a new complication to the German imbroglio already menacing. In this dilemma it was thought wiser to take a risk with Mexico—that being the weaker power. Ostensibly as part of the discipline to which the Mexicans had made themselves subject by their attacks upon our sailors it was determined to seize Vera Cruz and the custom

house at that port. This would of course enable the United States authorities to refuse permission for the German arms to be landed there.

It may be noted in passing that the Mexicans and Germans very readily saw through this rather transparent device and landed the arms through another port. So to that extent the policy of the United States was a failure, as it proved to be in the matter of the salute.

But the navy was not concerned with policies or reasons for action. Its part was to act. And however futile the occupation of Vera Cruz may have proved politically, as a naval maneuver it was carried out smartly and with swift efficiency.

The full fleet had not arrived in the harbor of Vera Cruz when, on April 21, 1914, Admiral Fletcher decided to land and take possession of the custom house lest the German ship *Yperanga*, which was already in the harbor, should attempt to land her cargo of arms.

It was not an easy task, for the Mexicans had more than six hundred regular soldiers in the town, besides the cadets of their naval academy—who, when the time came, put up a gallant fight with all the courage of boyhood. The authorities had also armed all the convicts in the various penal institutions of the town, so that its streets were crowded with an armed and lawless mob. Serious defense of the city against the American fleet was of course impossible. Any one of the great battleships could easily have reduced the town to a mass of ruins.

But this was not the desire of Admiral Fletcher, whose orders were merely to seize and hold the custom house. Accordingly even the ancient and dilapidated fortress of San Juan de Ulloa, standing in the harbor half a mile from the shore, was ignored. Its guns were impotent against the fleet and the handful of troops that garrisoned it might well be left for further consideration. The landing of our blue jackets and marines, however, might well have been made a desperate enterprise had the Mexican resistance been more determined. For the beach sloped gently down to a depth of water sufficient to float the boats, and the landing parties had to leap overboard into the water up to their waists and wade ashore in the face of the enemy's fire. The resistance to the landing was not, however, serious. It is probable that the Mexican general was somewhat in doubt as to the extent to which his chief, Huerta, desired to proceed in offering futile resistance to the overwhelming power of the fleet. Accordingly the landing parties of blue jackets and marines from the *Florida* and *Utah* secured a foothold on the beach without serious loss. In all, about two hundred marines and six hundred sailors were landed on the first day.

The next day, however, the Mexicans made up their minds to fight, and a galling fire was opened on the Americans in the streets of the town. Vera Cruz is a typical Spanish-American city. Its streets are narrow, the houses heavily built of masonry with parapeted flat roofs and deeply em-

brasured windows. They afforded the best possible cover for irregular forces, and were swarming with riflemen, both of the army and civilians—though in that country and at that time there were few civilians who had not had some experience in at least guerrilla warfare.

By this time the remainder of the Atlantic fleet, and with it the battalion of marines stationed at Panama, had reached the harbor. The “leather-necks” were landed at once so that by noon there were about two thousand marines in the town, in addition to a large force of sailors. Thereupon the work of cleaning up the town began.

It was a good hot fight, for hopeless as was the Mexican cause the defenders of the town put up a gallant resistance. They had a plentiful supply of machine guns, and every roof and window seemed to conceal snipers. The sailors suffered heavily, as they were led in charges through the open streets exposed to the full force of the machine gun fire and the incessant sniping from the rooftops. The marines employed different tactics. They have their own way of fighting, and it is usually effective as we shall see when we come to the story of their great battle at Belleau Wood. Here, instead of exposing themselves in the open streets, they went through the walls from one house to the next with pickaxes. The walls were often three feet thick, but that did not long delay them, and once they entered a new house they left none of its defenders to continue the fight. With a machine gun at one

end of a street to keep it clear of any Mexican reinforcements, and to mow down fugitives that fled from the houses, the marines would start in at the first house and break their way through to the end of the block. As soon as the first house was taken men were sent up to the roof to engage the Mexicans there and pursue them from roof to roof until the whole street was cleared. The enemy was thus assailed from above and below and by afternoon the marines had cleaned up all the part of the town allotted to them with the loss of but one man killed. The sailors in the streets suffered more seriously. Meanwhile the great fleet, that might have blown the town into dust with a few broadsides, lay silent in the offing only opening fire when the Mexican naval cadets began a lively fire from their academy upon the advancing Americans. Six shots from the *Panther* ended this resistance. After two days' fighting the town was wholly in American control with a loss of 19 killed and 70 wounded on our part, and on the side of the enemy very much larger.

Our naval forces held the town for a time, cleaning it up, putting in sewage and sanitary devices, and greatly improving it as a place of habitation. Then the army was installed in occupation and the marines retired. The whole episode was rather a mysterious one in American history. The salute to the flag, which nominally it was intended to enforce, was never paid. The cargo of German arms was landed at another port. Nineteen of our men and many more Mexicans were sacrificed for no-

body ever knew what. Huerta, who had flouted our authority, was overthrown by another Mexican revolution shortly after, and our troops were withdrawn. His successor, Carranza, was equally hostile to the United States, but during his régime, which was likewise ended by revolution and assassination, the United States forces were too busy elsewhere to be used to maintain our dignity in Mexico. Indeed while the fleet was tied up at Vera Cruz in 1914 there was a good deal of apprehension in the navy lest it should be more needed on our own coasts and found wanting.

After the Vera Cruz incident there came for the navy a period of quiescence. Across the Atlantic the fires of war were blazing brightly, but those who governed our nation were firmly convinced that the conflagration would never menace us. If officers of the navy foresaw more clearly than their civilian superiors the danger that lay awaiting us they prudently concealed their forebodings, or if they expressed them were subjected to mortifying discipline. The Secretary of the Navy himself, after the European war was fairly under way, declared in his report to the President that the navy needed no more men, and gradually "froze out" of office his chief adviser, the Aid for Operations, Admiral Fiske, because he urged too strenuously upon Congress and upon the country the need for more men and for a general staff.

It was urged by those who as early as 1916 wanted to see the navy put on a footing of higher

efficiency that the training of officers took four years, and the enlistment and training of blue jackets a time sufficiently long to justify immediate action to meet a threatened emergency. Nothing was done at the time, and when we did go into the war it was found necessary to cut down the professional training of officers fifty per cent by graduating them from Annapolis after a two years' course instead of the normal course of four years. The argument may be made that with these young officers we managed to struggle through the war and emerge victorious, but it must be remembered that it was not for us a fighting war. The service was wearing and arduous, that is true enough. But it was not a service in which we lost many officers who had to be replaced lest the efficiency of the fleet should suffer. Our enemy was penned up in his naval bases. So far as our fleet was concerned it never came to blows with the foe in a single fleet, or first-class ship action. The wearing monotony of the blockade and the convoy with an occasional "scrap" with a submarine filled out the record of our naval service. Had we fought a naval war such as Germany might have forced, had her fleet not been tied up by England's overwhelming strength, we should have had sore need for more trained officers.

In January, 1917, there were 4,500 officers and 68,000 blue jackets in our navy. By the following December there were 15,000 officers and 254,000 men. In April of 1918 there were 18,585 officers

and 283,717 men, and on November 8th of that year, two days before the signing of the armistice, there were 32,474 officers and 497,939 men enrolled. The word "men" is not quite accurate in this connection. For as Secretary Daniels wrote, "it became necessary to enroll capable and patriotic women as yeomen to meet the sudden expansion and enlarged duties imposed by war conditions." As a result of this the "yeomanette," or "yeo-woman" as the common phrase was, or the "yeoman (F)" according to the official title became a very prominent figure around the shore headquarters of the navy. They did not, however, go to sea—a fact that, with the acceptance of woman suffrage need not necessarily prevent some woman's yet being secretary of the navy.

The enormous increase in the personnel of the navy was not accomplished without effort, but it is a source of pride to the navy's friends that the navy was manned wholly by volunteers and without recourse to conscription. An immediate source of large accessions to the regular force was the Naval Reserve of the various states, which had happily been built up to a high degree of efficiency during the time of peace, and most of whose members were immediately available for petty officers and even for commissions. The members of this organization were enrolled in the federal service under the name of Naval Volunteers, and at the very outbreak of the war added forty-five thousand men to the service. The character of the men thus en-

rolled caused some curious incidents during the war, for the Naval Militia had been a form of volunteer service in peace times very popular with college boys, and the scions of wealthy families commonly referred to as "gilded youth." Once in the federal service they had no choice as to what particular form of duty they should perform. There is a story of a stoker, with two companions, still bearing the grime of his calling, who sought the best accommodations a Paris hotel would afford. The doubts of the landlord were set at rest by the display of a thousand-franc note, and a letter of credit that dazzled the eyes of the boniface. One of the greatest oil magnates of Oklahoma—a man who could have furnished gratis all the oil that a battleship would burn in a year and not feel the expense—was an orderly on one of the ships.

Regular officers of the navy, whose reward comes in professional attainments rather than in any pecuniary prosperity, were sometimes puzzled by this new and extraordinary variety of sailor men brought them by the war. The story is told that to the officer of the day on a ship lying in New York harbor came a "gob," cap in hand, asking leave to go ashore.

"For what purpose?" asked the officer.

"To look after a job that I have got, sir."

"But you are in the navy now. You mustn't be giving yourself any concern about jobs. What is this job anyway?"

"First vice-president of the ——— Railroad Com-

pany, sir. I've just been elected." The blue jacket was a scion of one of the best-known railroad families in the United States.

Curious stories are told concerning the complete ignorance of naval life manifested by some of the youngsters who were called to these training camps. Discipline was particularly hard for them to understand. Often they seemed to feel that there was an element of personal aversion on the part of superior officers who exacted the respect due to their rank. There is a story of a recruit who had been called up to the mast and received a proper dressing down from the commandant for some offense, and who met that functionary the next day on the parade. The recruit averted his eyes sheepishly and walked by. Instantly the officer turned, called him back and said sternly, "Why did you fail to salute?"

"Why, sir," said the gob, "I supposed you were still mad at me."

And although it would seem to be a very easy matter to teach youths to respond in sailor-like phrase to the word of command, it proved in fact very difficult to get them to say "aye, aye, sir," in place of "all right," or "sure." The officers' mess at Pelham Bay chuckled a long time over the purple rage of an old-time navy officer to whom a particularly green gob responded cheerfully on receiving an order, "Why, all right, brother!"

In due time these and all the other little creases of civilian life were duly ironed out by the work of

discipline. The men not only learned to hold themselves like sailors, but to think like sailors and to have only the one idea, namely, to reverence the flag and to do their duty by it. A writer on the gradual development of the Naval Reserve tells of a striking incident illustrative of this. He says:

“I happened to be sitting in an office in the Administration Building one afternoon, talking to some one, and between whiles idly watching a lot of men on the parade ground who were practising baseball and batting ‘fungoes’ about, when, on looking up, I saw that every man had dropped bat or ball, and turned towards the Y.M.C.A. building and stood frozen to attention, with his hand raised in salute. For a minute I could not think what it meant, when I remembered that a concert had been going on in the building, and that at the end of a concert it is customary to play the national anthem. I pointed it out to my officer friend, he raised his window, and sure enough the strains of ‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ came faintly floating out of the open windows of the Y. building. It is said that men in swimming have been seen to suddenly stand at attention and salute, with the water up to their chests, when they heard the sound of that tune.”

Enlisted men came from every walk of American life. The farms furnished perhaps the greater share. It is a curious fact that the desire for a seafaring life should have manifested itself strongly among tens of thousands of boys who had never

seen a ship, except in pictures, and whose nostrils had never sensed the tang of salt air. For half a century and more the nation had legislated in behalf of its fisheries on the theory that they served as a nursery for naval seamen. But when the emergency came it was to the plains of the West that we turned for blue jackets, not to the fleets of Gloucester and the Great Bank. One reason for this was that the fishing fleet was not itself overmanned, and we could not afford to strip so important an agency for the feeding of the nation.

Not all of the boys who came flocking from farms and workshops had their desire to go to sea satisfied. That was one of the pathetic parts of the service. The period of war was so brief, the final armistice came so unexpectedly, that tens of thousands of youths were enlisted who never got out of their training camps. Of those who went to sea not many saw as much of foreign lands as they had anticipated. The exigencies of the war service made foreign shore leave infrequent and brief. There were many instances of youths who crossed the ocean a score of times and saw nothing more of the shore than a few miles about the port to which their ships were ordered. "Join the navy and see the world—through a port hole!" was the satirical way in which the blue jackets amended one of the enticing posters urging enlistments.

Some account of the routine of one of the great training camps through which perhaps fifty thousand young men passed during the brief period of

the war will be of interest. There were two such camps. One known as the Great Lakes Training Station, on the shore of Lake Michigan, twenty miles north of Chicago, was designed as a permanent adjunct to the navy. It is a magnificent group of substantial buildings, capable of caring for twenty-five thousand recruits at a time and is one of the show places of the neighborhood. The second camp, at Pelham Bay Park, on Long Island Sound, within the city limits of Greater New York, was originally planned to train five thousand seamen, and ultimately so developed as to accommodate forty thousand. It was a small town of rough wooden barracks, without architectural pretension or beauty, but withal carefully planned with reference to sanitation and utility. The site was beautiful, on a wooded neck of land that had been cared for by the city as a park, sloping gently down to the water, where there was a bathing beach and a broad expanse of placid sea for boat drills and exercises. To this camp came all sorts and conditions of boys—boys from New York's lower East Side, whose strange jumble of foreign tongues made one wonder just what constituted an American citizen; boys from lonely prairie farms to whom the proximity to a great city and the constant presence of the sea were sources of daily delight; boys from our most aristocratic colleges, and boys who could with difficulty read words of one syllable; boys whose allowances had exceeded the income of a fairly prosperous professional man,

and boys to whom the navy pay and allowances seemed like a fortune. Not all were mere boys. There were college tutors, young professional men, men of business affairs who had set aside their own interests to serve the nation. Once entered by the great gate of the training camp all were for the moment reduced to perfect equality—stripped, bathed, examined by a surgeon, vaccinated against smallpox, inoculated for typhoid, charted on a card that noted all physical characteristics and displayed the finger-prints of the recruit as the police records bear those of convicted criminals.

The man who shipped in the navy was left no shred of individual dignity to set him above his fellows. The petted society man and the cowboy of the West went through the same mill. Each had issued to him the same outfit of clothing with a sea-bag in which to store it. Each shouldered his bag and marched off to his quarters to begin learning to be a blue jacket—or as the naval phrase, less polite, had it, “a gob.”

The camp was treated as though it was a ship. To leave its bounds was to “go ashore.” To report to the commander for reproof was to be “up at the mast.” Getting out of bed at 5.30 sharp was “hitting the deck.” The recruit was taught to substitute “aye, aye, sir,” for the landsman’s “all right,” and to salute every officer on sight. That indefinable something called “discipline,” to which every man on a man-of-war from captain to stoker must submit, was drilled into him hour by hour and day

by day. A singular thing that discipline. Offensive to the civilian mind it alone makes life bearable where great masses of men are intimately associated in the pursuit of some common end. Rightly understood it bears no more harshly upon the "gob" than upon the admiral. When it has become, as in the navy, a true second nature, it not only averts friction in normal times, but in a moment of peril or catastrophe is the greatest safeguard of the ship's company. Disciplined men in a moment of extreme danger, perform automatically, subconsciously, those necessary acts that the undisciplined mind would forget in its wild panic.

Illustrations of this are innumerable in naval annals. The case of Sergeant Anthony, in the midst of the horror of the sinking of the *Maine*, with magazines exploding and men being blown to bits on every side, coming quietly to the door of Captain Sigsbee's cabin with the formal salute and the report, "Sir, the ship has been blown up and is sinking," is but one case in point. In the same disaster Lieutenant Jenkins, caught between decks of the ship that was shaking with repeated explosions, sprang not to a place of safety but to the gun which he was to command in action. So swiftly did he seek his place of duty that he was caught in the second explosion and killed.

This is the end and aim of all military and naval discipline—to so substitute a trained and formal course of action for the normal instinct of the human mind that in an emergency the man will

do what he has been taught to do, do it at once, instinctively and without responding to the normal dictates of his mind at such a moment. It is urged against discipline of this kind that it substitutes a machine for a reasoning human being. But this is true only in so far as it compels purely mechanical action, according to a carefully matured plan, at a moment when reliance upon hasty individual judgment would be fatal.

And while being thus steadily subjected to discipline the young recruit is also being taught the rudiments of his duty as a seaman. There is plenty for him to learn. He has squad drill and the manual of arms. He must learn to take care of his clothing with a degree of preciseness that seems to him mere foolish "fussiness." But in the straitened space on ship if everything is not in its exact place all will be in desperate disorder. When 1,200 men are cooped up in such narrow compass, the utmost respect for system must be observed if conditions are to be kept at all tolerable, or indeed safe. This is why in their apprentice days the boys are taught to place their shoes just so on turning in, and to fold all garments in a fashion that seems to be dictated only by the whim of some officer with a talent for making trouble. Moreover, the youngster learns to do a lot for himself that he had hitherto left to the loving care of mother, or the more mercenary service of the tailor or laundress. He learns to mend his clothes and to wash them—the latter no small job in the summer season when

"whites" or white cotton uniforms are the order of the day.

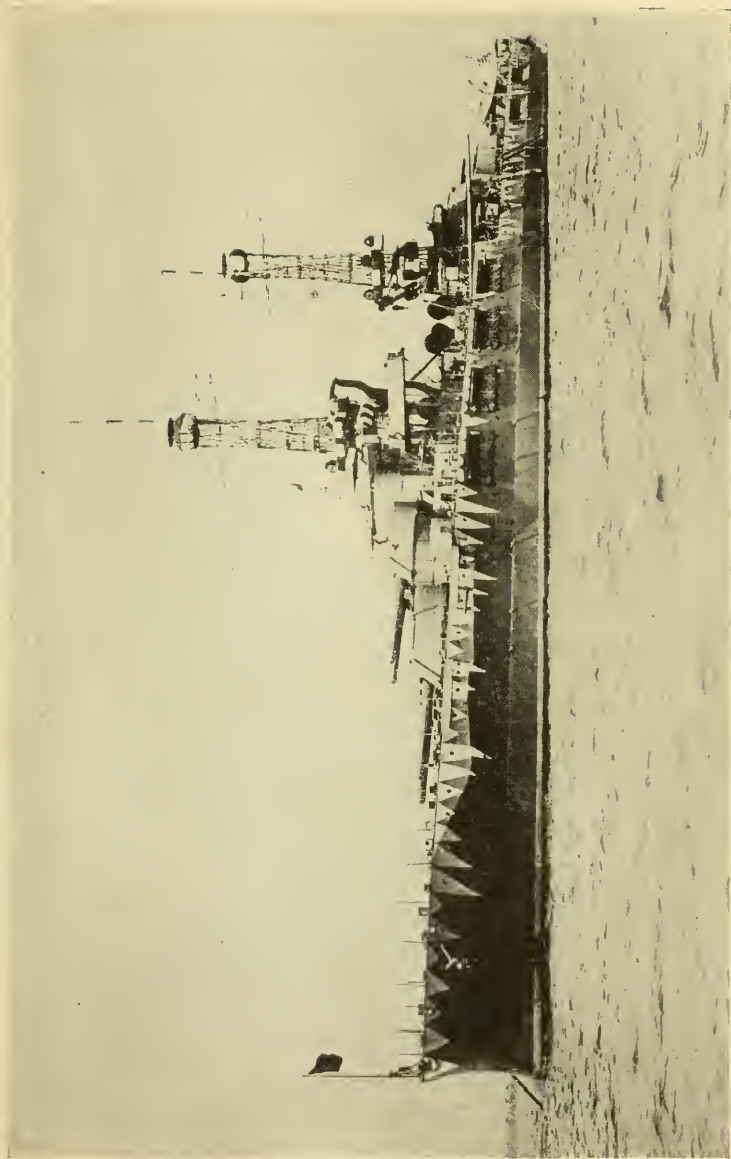
"Marlinspike seamanship," or the art of making knots, splices, bends and hitches, engages his fingers for awhile. There are not many ropes on a modern man-of-war. Bolts and nuts take their place and a monkey wrench comes into use more often than a marlinspike. But the old arts of seamanship are not yet wholly abandoned. In the camp the recruit finds ship's bridges—with no ships under them—from which he learns to wigwag, work the semaphore and heave the lead. On wharves, quite destitute of neighboring water, he makes hawsers fast to cleats and bits, and brings imaginary boats to a firm mooring. He pulls a "dry oar" in boats far from the water in order to learn the man-of-war stroke. He must learn to "box the compass," to give the bearings of an imaginary vessel sighted perhaps "two points off the starboard quarter," and, with the aid of the "Blue Jackets' Manual," to understand a few hundred sea terms only a little more understandable than Greek to the average landsman.

The bodies of the would-be sailors were subjected to a training and discipline only a little less arduous than that of their minds. In fact it would have been considered a great deal more trying except for the fact that the element of sport was introduced wherever it was possible. Athletic instructors and coaches were called from a score of colleges, and at every reception and training camp

the boys were given the opportunity to share in athletic sports that under ordinary circumstances only college boys can enjoy. Their "teams," "elevens" and "nines" had the advantages of numbering among their players college stars of experience and fame on the track, the gridiron or the diamond. In fact, so largely did the football stars of the colleges go into the navy service that the sport was largely abandoned among American colleges in the fall of 1917 and 1918.

In organizing the physical training work the curious fact was discovered that of the thousands of young men gathered for naval service not one-half could swim. Accordingly much attention was given to teaching this art so essential to the safety of men whose lives are to be spent at sea. Boxing was taught for two reasons—first, its obvious value as a means of self-defense, and, second, because of the fact that it was closely related to bayonet exercise. The maxim was laid down that "every move of the boxer is a corresponding move by the bayonet." The "counter" with the fist is equivalent to the "parry" with the bayonet, and the "jab" is equal to the "lunge." Boxing was always a popular sport in the navy, as the broad decks of the battleships offered unusual facilities for pitching "the squared circle" and with the official recognition now given to it the rivalry of the champions of the various camps, fleets and ships became intense.

Besides the great schools for the training of seamen there were lesser naval schools for higher and



The *Oklahoma* with Style of Camouflage to Make Range Finding Difficult

more technical education, such as the Engineers' School at Hoboken, N. J., a radio school at Harvard, Officers' Material Schools at New York and Boston, with naval flying schools at Pensacola, Hampton Roads, Bay Shore, N. Y., Mt. Clemens, Mich., and San Diego, California.

When the United States had been at war four months the arrangements for the training of seamen, and the education of officers, were such as to meet every possible need of an enormous navy. That the sudden end of the war made all this organization useless is no reflection upon the policy which created it. In every branch of war activities, manufacturing, transportation, military or naval, our government wisely prepared for a long struggle. That the Huns should collapse after our armies had been in active service for a scant six months could not possibly have been foreseen.

To those who made a study of these admirable training camps, both military and naval, there came a general feeling of regret that they could not be maintained permanently for the education of the youth of the country. It is a curious and a lamentable fact that a nation is always able to find millions—in the late war all nations found billions—to prosecute a war, and not always a just war or a war for defense at that, while in peace it begrudges a few hundred thousands to the cause of education, or of social service. No Congress has ever been willing to make the necessary appropriations for the military or naval training, for even a few

months, of all our youth in time of peace. That such training, if accompanied as it well might be by schooling in the essentials of a trade, would be of incalculable value to the body of the people, and therefore to the nation, is seldom questioned. But the cost has always been a bar to congressional action. When war comes cost is never reckoned. But after the war it is not unprofitable to reckon on what might have been done with the enormous sums spent in waste, had they been used to improve the living conditions of the people, to cheapen transportation, and hence food and clothing, to educate the youth and to care for those in old age. Such speculations as these have attended the close of every war but the world has learned no wisdom.

CHAPTER III

Tasks before the United States navy.—Building a merchant fleet.—The interned German ships.—Vandalism quickly corrected.—The ocean ferry.—Strength of German naval bases.—How to beat the U-boat.—The destroyers.—First squadron for Europe.—Strength and weakness of the submarine.—The convoy.—Keeping tab on submarines.—Anti-submarine strategy.—Our naval base at Queenstown.—Trouble with Sinn Fein.

Two definite tasks were presented to the American navy at the beginning of the war. They were of equal importance. No one could say that either might be neglected in favor of the other. For one was to carry our army across three thousand miles of ocean that it might aid in giving the final death stroke to the Hun. The other was to so police the seas that England might be fed, and all the magnificent fighting of the Allied armies not be brought to naught by the starvation of the English people into subjection.

Both tasks were successfully accomplished. But neither was completed without great aid from the British navy and the British government. Our army was successfully carried to France, and any reasonable observer of the war will admit that it certainly hastened the Allied victory, even if it be asserted that that victory would have come eventually had the United States not entered upon the

war. But sixty per cent of our men were carried across the ocean in British ships. This fact detracts neither from the patriotic impulse that sent them across, nor from the skill with which Americans directed and guarded the voyages of the convoys. We simply did not have the needful ships afloat under our flag. If there be critics, either among our own people or foreigners, who wish to pick flaws in our service they may justly direct their criticisms against the policy of government that had permitted our merchant marine so to dwindle that we had not the ships wherewith to transport our own army in an emergency.

But with that emergency at hand the people of the United States, as usual, put forth their utmost energy to meet it. Every available ship flying the United States flag was pressed into the service. The coastwise lines were stripped. From the Great Lakes vessels were brought to the Atlantic by every conceivable route, and by the application of every imaginable device for getting them past the obstacles in the path. Cutting ships in two on Lake Erie, and welding together the severed parts after they had passed the locks of the Welland and the St. Lawrence canals was a commonplace expedient. One vessel was floated through the canals on her side, as her depth was less than her beam. Ship-yards were established all over the United States for the hasty construction of vessels to carry fighting men to France, and food to England. The building of wooden ships, almost a lost art, was

revived, though it must be said without a degree of success that will lead to its continuance. But ports that never expected to see a ship rising on the ways became the site of busy shipyards because of their proximity to supplies of ship timber in the forests. The shores of the Gulf of Mexico and the coasts of Oregon and Washington resounded to the noise of the shipwright's adze and the calker's hammer, and fleets of uncompleted ships were there still on their ways when the armistice abruptly ended their construction.

A great nucleus was furnished for the new fleet by the presence in American ports of 109 German vessels that had been interned at the beginning of the war to save them from the British navy, and that now fell into our hands. These ships aggregated more than 500,000 tons and ranged in size from the magnificent *Vaterland*, the greatest ship in the world, of more than 50,000 tons displacement, down to 4,500-ton cargo carriers, not spectacular vessels but the type in which the bulk of the world's commerce is carried on. A great number, however, were passenger liners of the best type. For many years before the war the German government, and the Kaiser personally, had exerted every effort to get away from England a large share of the ocean-carrying trade which that nation had so long almost monopolized. So far as high-class passenger trade was concerned the German effort had been very successful. The Hamburg-American line had become the greatest fleet of ocean-going ships

in the world, and palatial vessels flying the red, black and white were favorite passenger carriers between the United States and Europe, and on pleasure trips around the world which Germans organized and conducted with extraordinary skill. Scarcely any feature in the commercial development of the day was more remarkable than the rapidly progressing German conquest of the seas when the criminal and suicidal conspiracy of the Teutonic nations to force a war upon a peaceful world brought the whole edifice down in complete smash. Apologists for Germany insist, that it was this maritime development that so aroused British jealousy as to make the forcing of the war a necessary act of national self-preservation for Germany, but if that were so, which is more than doubtful, the remedy was tenfold worse than the danger. For the war was not ten days old before all peaceful German commerce was swept from the seas by the British navy. A few raiders, and Admiral von Spee's squadron, were free for a few weeks until overtaken and destroyed by British men-of-war, while the German merchant ships were either captured forthwith, or driven into internment in neutral harbors for the period of the war.

Those that sought refuge in our harbors were kept under American guard until such time as our own entrance upon the conflict made them our own spoil of war. The greatest fleet of all—though there were a few ships interned in every considerable American harbor—was laid up at Hoboken,

directly across the North River from New York City. Here were the biggest and best of the German liners, beginning with the huge *Vaterland*, and including the most popular ships of the ocean ferry. Their crews were interned with them, and for the early period of the war Hoboken had much the air of a German seaport. While under a certain espionage, and subject to regulations as to their actions, the officers and men, living on the ships were to all intents and purposes free, and probably congratulated themselves on their escape from the hardships and carnage of the war at home. But now and then the spirit of patriotism moved some of them to try to make their way back to Germany to join their countrymen in battle. It was no easy job, for the British were searching the merchant ships of all nations for just such enemies, and but few were able to reach their destination.

When the United States declared war the liberty enjoyed by the interned Germans was at once stopped. It was perilous to have such considerable bodies of enemy aliens congregated at or near our seaports where they might convey information to the enemy of the movements of our ships, or commit actual depredations upon our shipping. Accordingly internment camps, and war prison barracks, were prepared for this class of prisoners. The largest of these camps was at Hot Springs, N. C., where an old hotel, reminiscent of the by-gone days when the place was a famous resort for southern people, furnished the nucleus of living quarters

for a thousand or so of German officers and men. The hotel itself was the least commodious of the quarters. Given a good deal of freedom, and materials with which to build homes to suit themselves, the men built by the side of the rushing river, which there flows through lush meadows bordered on either side by precipitous mountains, a most picturesque little village. Rustic houses built of limbs of trees, roots, rocks and odds and ends of material picked up about the camp gave opportunity for picturesque planning. Even a small church was built. The prisoners were practically a self-governing community, having only one roll-call a day, and the rest of the time following a programme determined by their own officers, or by committees which they selected. In comparison with their fellows in the trenches before Verdun they were in an earthly paradise.

But even before the declaration of war by the United States, and while the German sailors were still living on their ships in leisurely ease and comfort, they were plotting against the welfare of this government. As it became increasingly evident that the United States would be forced into war, suspicion grew that the Germans on the great fleet of interned vessels would commit some acts of violence to prevent their falling into the hands of the United States in a condition fit for service. But, however strong that suspicion, there was no way to verify it, or to avert the action apprehended, short of war—and for that the administration at Wash-

ington was not ready. The German ships were German territory. The United States had no more authority to take possession of them, or even to inspect them by force than it had to take the same action in the German embassy at Washington. It was, in fact, entirely within the right of the officers on the German ships, if they so chose, to get up steam and put out to sea any day before our declaration of war. That they did not do so was due to their knowledge of the fact that outside the harbor lurked two or three British men-of-war awaiting just such a move, and ready to capture the fugitive or blow it out of water.

However, if flight was denied the Germans, the opportunity for doing sinister damage to the ships from within was open to them. Doing this was quite as much an act of war as the forcible entry upon the vessels by the United States for the purpose of averting just such action would have been. But this nation lived up to its duties and responsibilities as a neutral. The Germans flatly violated theirs—and did it upon direct orders from the legation embassy at Washington where the Ambassador was daily making protestations of friendship to the United States.

Practically every German ship was more or less seriously damaged by the secret work of their crews. One, the *Liebenfels*, was sunk in Charleston harbor by opening her seacocks, her crew taking to the boats for safety. Engine cylinders were fractured by blows with sledge-hammers. Piston-

rods were cut. Engine-room telegraph systems were smashed. Delicate parts of the machinery were broken, but so patched up that the damage would not show, in the hope that when the Americans took command and got up steam in the boilers, disastrous, and even fatal, explosions might follow. The most ingenious devices to accomplish this end were employed, and after the Americans had detected one or two it became apparent that the whole machinery of each of the interned ships would have to be gone over with a magnifying glass before it would be safe to send any to sea. It was a discouraging outlook. The ships were seized in April, immediately upon the declaration of war, with the expectation that they could at once be put into the service of carrying troops for which they were so greatly needed. But the first survey made of their condition resulted in a report that no ship could be used for at least eight months, while some would need two years for repairing. But our navy officials brought to bear upon the problem all the mechanical ingenuity of which Americans were capable. Railroad shops and the greatest mechanical institutions of the land were stripped of their experts, and the job of restoring the ships was begun while the Germans responsible for their condition were enjoying themselves at Hot Springs.

The ships had, of course, been built in German shipyards, and it was at once apparent that to replace the broken parts was quite out of the question. Should entirely new machinery then be in-

stalled? That too upon consideration seemed impracticable, as it would have involved new designs, the delay of construction and then the laborious work of installation. In the end the Navy Bureau of Steam Engineering, to which the problem had been referred, determined to patch up the machinery as it stood. This raised many novel mechanical questions. To put a patch in the side of a huge steam cylinder every inch of which would be subject to enormous steam pressure, or to weld the broken parts of a great piston on which rested the burden of driving the *Vaterland* through the rolling waves were mechanical expedients hitherto untried. Under the direction of navy engineers, however, they were employed for the repair of the engines of the larger German ships, and with such success that while the fleet had been taken over in April, 1917, all damages had been repaired by December of that year and five hundred thousand tons of shipping was added to our wartime fleet. Most of the German ships were put in use as transports and the time required for fixing their machinery was but little more than was requisite for fitting their hulls for this type of service.

Less vital perhaps, but at the same time important to the American mind, was the correction of the names of the captured vessels. The huge *Vaterland*, greatest of all ships afloat, became the *Leviathan*, and now floats the American flag. The *Amerika* dropped her Teutonic "k" for a "c", the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* became the *von Steuben* in

honor of the German who, in revolutionary days, threw in his lot with Washington and the Continental army, the *Prinz Eitel Friederich*, a commerce destroyer became the *De Kalb*, commemorating the name of another German who aided our revolutionary efforts. The last two changes suggest a purpose on the part of the Navy Department to emphasize the President's statement that our quarrel was not with the German people, but with the militarists who constituted for the time the German government, and who in the end brought that thriving and progressive nation down to ruin and despair.

Under their new names these German ships did magnificent service in transporting to Europe the army of American soldiers that put the final stroke to the defeat of Germany.

The accomplishment of this end offered entirely new military and naval problems. Never before, under conditions of modern warfare, had an army been transported across three thousand miles of sea, and landed in a foreign country to operate against an alert and powerful enemy. The nearest approach to such a task had been that accomplished successfully by the British in their war with the Boers of South Africa. But they had a comparatively weak adversary to encounter, and the landing-place for their expedition was on the soil of their own colony. The United States confronted a foe who had fought all western Europe practically to a standstill, and had to establish its own naval

bases and bases of supply on the soil of a foreign nation. It had, moreover, to transport its troops over three thousand miles of ocean in which lurked enemy vessels of a type with which the navies of the world had not yet learned how to cope.

The German submarines had brought the British Isles to the verge of starvation merely by patrolling the ocean lanes leading to English ports and sinking as many as possible of the ships bound to that country. With the greatest navy the world had ever known, a navy the efficiency of which was as notable as its mere size, the British had been utterly unable to meet this grave menace. The interview of Admiral Sims with Admiral Jellicoe, quoted in a preceding chapter, shows how despairing was the British outlook upon the situation which German submarine activity had created. If it was becoming more and more difficult for a ship laden with food to reach a British port, how much more precarious would be the fortunes of transports laden with soldiers, and bound for either British or French havens? The same narrow lanes would have to be traversed. The same "neck of the bottle," as the entrance to the English Channel was called, would have to be passed. The food ships came from every port in the world, their sailing unnoticed and their courses uncharted. But our transports would set out from one or two well-known American harbors. The multiplicity of German spies might be expected to send prompt

word of their sailing. Their courses lay along well-known ocean lanes, and the points which they must pass to reach either French or British ports were easily foretold. It was with grave apprehensions that our government approached a task which threatened so heavy a loss of human life.

And yet those apprehensions were far from realized. We lost the lives of gallant soldiers in the ocean ferry. That was true enough. But the losses were far less than the most sanguine would have foretold in view of the multitudinous dangers lurking in the path. Before the armistice was signed we had landed in France or England more than two million men. Not one life was lost on an American transport, and in proportion to the number carried the number of lives lost on other ships was small.

But before that work could be begun the Atlantic lanes must be swept clear of submarines, or at least the activities of German vessels of that type must be so checked that we might be able to land our army in Europe without crippling losses. This the Germans did not believe we should ever be able to do, and when the success we had attained in this effort finally dawned upon them it was the revelation that finally shattered the morale of their army, broke the spirit of their people and made their surrender inevitable.

It followed, therefore, that, so far as the navy of the United States was concerned, the World War resolved itself into a long-continued fight upon the

submarine. To our British cousins and our French allies service afloat offered more variety. To the British navy fell at the outset the task of hunting down and destroying the German raiders, including the powerful squadron of Admiral von Spee, which was not destroyed until after it had inflicted a decisive defeat upon the inferior British fleet which first encountered it. The British had imposed upon them not only the task of keeping the German high seas fleet immured at its base, but had occasionally to fight pitched battles to keep that blockade effective. British ships co-operated with the Allied army in Flanders, and conducted a persistent bombardment of the enemy's works along the shores of the Channel and the North Sea. British blue jackets conducted the famous raid upon the mole and submarine base at Zeebrugge. The ill-fated expedition to the Dardanelles called into action a very large part of the British fleet, and, though unsuccessful, at least afforded to the British blue jackets some relief from the deadly monotony of the blockade and the submarine search. The battle of Jutland, the only great sea fight between fleets of modern ships of war, was a duel between the British and German navies alone, with the rest of the Allies left out.

Accordingly, the service demanded of our navy was monotonous and far from spectacular. But it was not for that reason the less important or dangerous. Of its importance the revelations made by Admiral Jellicoe to Admiral Sims afford the best

proof. Of the danger involved, and of the daring and devotion with which our men met those dangers this book has yet to tell.

The story of the work of our navy in 1918 and the year following differs largely from the story which the present author has told of it in our earlier wars, in that the work of the big ships—the dreadnoughts and the battle cruisers—figured but little. There were no single ship duels, like that of the *Constitution* and the *Guerriere* in our War of 1812, nor any fleet actions like that off the harbor of Santiago in 1898. Our big ships were on guard, it is true enough, breasting the waves and steaming through the cold gray fogs of the North Sea. But they were on the alert against an enemy that never came out for battle. Suspense, discomfort and ennui were the foes against which their people had most to struggle.

When the United States was fairly launched upon the war there were many who thought that one of the first fruits of our assistance would be to spur the British navy into some sort of an attack upon those fortified bases whence the submarines had for years been sallying forth to prey upon the shipping of the world. We quoted Farragut with his, "Damn the torpedoes! Go ahead!" We recalled Dewey steaming into Manila harbor at dead of night indifferent to any possible mines. It seemed to us incredible that the greatest naval power in the world should have been stood off for three years by the defenses of the retreats of the

enemy's underwater boats and have been brought to the very point of national defeat by its inability to check those submarine pests.

But once in we found that the same considerations that had restrained the British influenced us. The defenses behind which the German High Seas Fleet rested in safety, and the bases to which the submarines retired after more or less successful forays along the lanes of commerce were so defended by nature and by art that attack upon them would have been suicidal. Out at sea, thirty-five miles or more from the German coast lay the island of Heligoland which the Germans had converted into an enormous and impregnable fortress—the Gibraltar of the North Sea. Its great guns, disappearing behind unshakable earthworks after every shot, commanded the sea for a space of twenty miles at least. A ship engaged in a duel with them was outclassed from the first. Its armor, steel though it were and two feet thick, opposed no such resistance to projectiles as did those massive walls of dirt. The naval cannon, prodigious though they were and terrible as were their shells, were fired from a base ever tossing and rolling on an unquiet sea, while the guns of the fort were mounted on a firm foundation. We, of the United States have ever felt that Farragut at Mobile and below New Orleans, and Dewey at Manila had proved that ships could always run past forts though they might not be able to reduce them. But modern naval tactics tend to discard

this theory, especially when the forts are reinforced by submarines and naval vessels operating under cover of their guns, and fields of mines skilfully laid.

Heligoland was but the advance post, the first line of the German defense. Back of it were mine-fields that guarded every approach to the coast. The harbors of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, the chief naval bases of the enemy were defended by every device known to modern warfare. In them the great German fleet that had been built up at huge expense, and that had so aroused the pride of every German from Kaiser to keller, rested supine, in ignoble inactivity throughout the war. Its only two considerable forays were promptly met by the British, and its vessels fled "helter-skelter through the blue" till they got safely back to port. In British naval annals there is some discussion as to whether in the greater battle in which the two fleets came into contact, the battle of Jutland, more dash and pertinacity on the part of Admiral Jellicoe might not have resulted in the capture or destruction of the greater part of the enemy fleet. Concerning this British controversy is active, but it needs no attention in a story of the American navy.

Accepting then as inevitable and unchangeable the fact that the Germans could continue to build submarines and to dispatch them on their errand of destruction from ports too strongly protected to admit of successful naval attack the question pre-

sented was how to grapple with them successfully after they had reached the open sea.

If England was to be fed the sinking of food ships must be stopped or at least reduced to such proportions that more ships could be built, and food cargoes landed, than the Germans were able to destroy. And if Germany was to be finally beaten on land it would be necessary to make ocean passage at least reasonably safe for our laden troop-ships.

A fortnight before our declaration of war Admiral Sims, and a naval aide, had been secretly dispatched to London to prepare for co-operation with the British navy in the war which, it was apparent then to every one, was inevitable. What Admiral Jellicoe told the American officer has already been quoted. The best authorities in Great Britain estimated that unless the Germans could be checked the limit of England's endurance would be reached November 1st—and it was then April.

The British admiralty had exhausted, it appeared, human ingenuity in the search for a defense against the underwater foe. Inventors on that side of the water, as on this, had racked their brains in vain. It is reported that in England not less than forty thousand inventions for the balking of the submarine were investigated and discarded. Nearly as many were offered on this side of the ocean. Most of them were ridiculous; some seemed promising. But the chief trouble with all was that they required months for their perfection, and time

was exactly the thing that was not available. To those who actually knew the situation there was something ludicrous, if it had not been pathetic, in the newspaper stories of a great American inventor who was said to have retired to a lonely mountain top to give weeks of uninterrupted thought to the invention of a device to meet the need. Nothing ever came of his cogitations but had they been fruitful there would have been no time for building anything new. The U-boat had to be beaten with weapons already forged.

What was to be the weapon? It was apparent to Admiral Sims and other naval experts of trained judgment that the submarine "nests" could not be destroyed, nor could the birds of prey be penned in them by any naval force that was attainable. Mines had been tried and failed. The enemy swept them up long enough for the U-boat to slip out and in at will. The only vessel afloat which seemed at all able to cope with these mysterious craft was the destroyer, and of these the British navy, though incomparably first in numbers, had not enough for the emergency.

The destroyer is a type of naval vessel which had its origin at the time of the Russo-Japanese war. In that conflict one or two successes with torpedo boats started the cry that great battleships were going to be done away with altogether by these swift and sinister serpents of the sea. But to meet the menace of the torpedo boat the naval architects devised the torpedo-boat destroyer. Their inge-

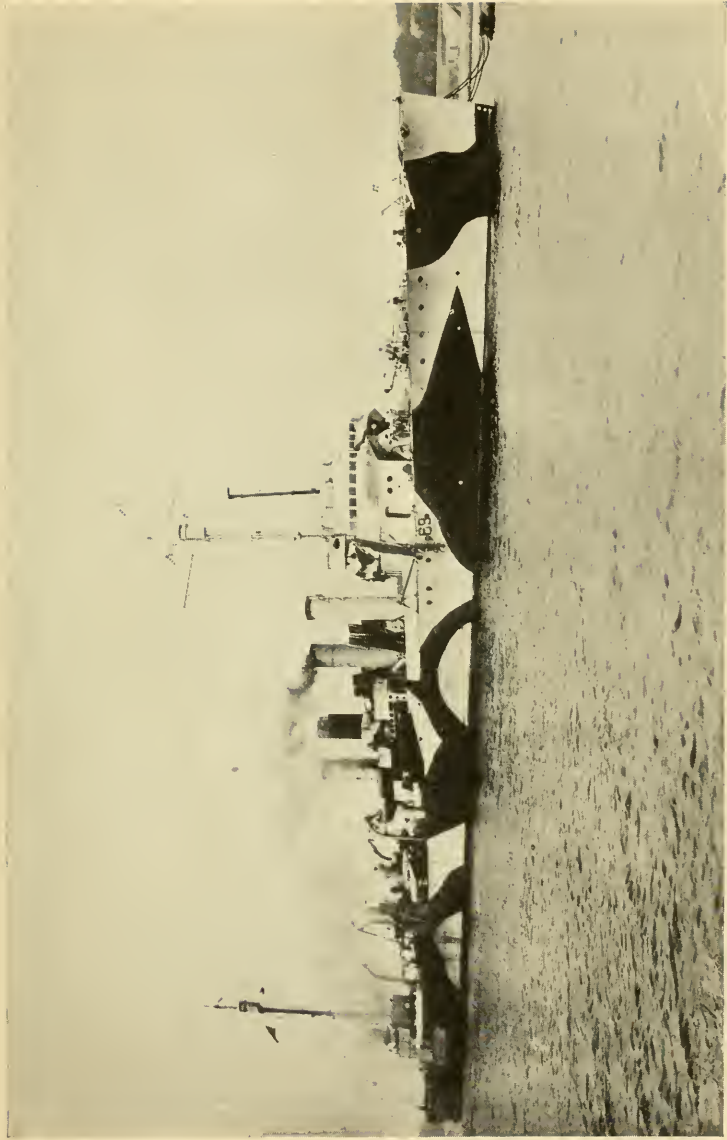
nulty somewhat recalls the rather flippant allegory of the student in Victor Hugo's romance, *Les Misérables*.—"The Bon Dieu made a mouse. 'Hullo,' he said, 'I've made a mistake.' So he made a cat to correct it."

The destroyers at once proved their efficiency as antagonists to the torpedo boats, so much so that a few years after their appearance the latter had wholly disappeared. Having driven the torpedo boats from the seas, the destroyers themselves began to exercise most of their functions. They were fitted with torpedo tubes, and because of their greater size could carry a larger armament of this nature than had the little vessels they had displaced. They are, in fact not small craft, but ships of considerable length, though of light draft and small beam. They are usually capable of a speed of about thirty-two knots an hour, although some have been designed to exceed this limit. In length they are about three hundred feet on the average, with a beam of thirty feet. Besides their torpedo tubes they carried five four-inch guns, firing shells weighing sixty pounds. The average destroyer was of about one thousand tons and carried a crew of ninety-five.

Of these ships the British had in commission in April, 1917, about two hundred. But not all of these were free for service against the submarines. For it is an essential point of naval tactics that battleships must always be guarded by destroyers when there is danger of an attack by submarine.

The German High Seas Fleet, though little inclined to fight, had made one or two cruises, was in superb fighting condition and could not be ignored as a fighting enemy. Accordingly at least one hundred destroyers must be kept permanently with the British Grand Fleet whether it was at anchor at Scapa Flow, or cruising in the North Sea. The Germans were known to have a protecting screen of two hundred destroyers for their fleet, and while the release of the British destroyers for campaigns against the submarines was often discussed it was always abandoned on grounds of prudence.

It was clearly to the German interest to employ every possible expedient for keeping the destroyers away from the lanes of commerce in which their submarines were operating. To accomplish this end they adopted the seemingly wanton and brutal policy of attacking hospital ships. To the average mind there could be no reason why a foe should sink a ship bearing only the sick and wounded, unarmed and flying the flag of the Red Cross. But the Germans did this persistently, arousing thereby a cry of wrath from every civilized people. It seemed to be done for mere frightfulness, for the lust of slaughter. But there was in fact a very definite military purpose in the seemingly wanton act. The Germans knew that no nation would allow its wounded to be thus assassinated for want of a guard, and every destroyer assigned to the work of protecting the hospital ships made it that much safer for the submarines



U.S.S. *Caldwell*, American Destroyer in Queenstown Harbor

that were sinking the food ships voyaging toward English ports. Just as soon as the Allies began protecting their hospital ships with destroyers the German attacks upon them ceased.

In his discussion of the naval operations of the war, Admiral Sims, recognizing the advantage that would accrue to the Germans if they could keep the United States destroyers tied up on guard duty, was apprehensive that they might send a few submarines to our coasts in order to awaken the fears of our people. They had the submarines necessary for this purpose. There was already a demand on the part of certain elements in our society—usually covert sympathizers with Germany—that all our navy should be held to guard our own coasts, and such an attack, with the bombardment of a few of our coast towns, would have made that demand irresistible. Happily, the expedient was never seriously tried by the enemy. Admiral Sims thinks this was because of “a desire to play gently with the United States, and in that way to delay our military preparations and win the war without coming into bloody contact with the American people.”

In view of the inadequacy of the British submarine fleet to meet the needs of the great emergency that confronted the Allies, the Admiral's first act was to cable a full statement of the gravity of the situation to Washington. This was supplemented by messages of like tenor from Ambassador Page and from Mr. Balfour, the British Foreign

Secretary. All these messages urged the United States to send without delay all its destroyers and other light craft to Queenstown and put them into immediate co-operation with the British fleet.

The appeal met with a prompt response. At the time of the declaration of war the Eighth Destroyer Division was stationed in the York River, Virginia. It comprised the following vessels: *Wadsworth*, flagship, Commander Joseph K. Taussig; *Conyngham*, Commander Alfred W. Johnson; *Porter*, Lieutenant-Commander Ward K. Wortman; *McDougal*, Lieutenant-Commander Arthur P. Fairfield; *Davis*, Lieutenant-Commander Rufus F. Zogbaum, and *Wainwright*, Lieutenant-Commander Fred H. Poteet.

At seven o'clock in the evening of April 6, 1917, the day that Congress declared war, lights twinkling from the foremast of the *Pennsylvania*, flagship of the Atlantic fleet, conveyed to Commander Taussig this order: "Mobilize for war in accordance with the Department's confidential mobilization plan of March 21st." This meant first, immediate procedure to a specified navy yard for refitting and by daybreak the little flotilla was on its way. The ships were docked, hulls scraped and painted, stores and provisions for three months taken on, and finally sailed under sealed orders which were to be opened when the squadron was fifty miles east of Cape Cod. That point gained Commander Taussig broke open the official envelope with natural eagerness. It directed him to

take his ships to Queenstown and there to "report to senior British naval officer present, and thereafter co-operate fully with the British navy." He was informed that his "mission is (was) to assist naval operations of Entente Powers in every way possible." It was the first order for armed action in the war with Germany.

Never before had a fleet of such small vessels been ordered to make so long a continuous voyage without opportunity for taking on fresh supplies of fuel or without the escort of a "mother ship." But the voyage was made seemingly without incident, for Commander Taussig in his report deals chiefly with his arrival. He wrote:

"We were ten days in making the trip, due mostly to a southeast gale, which accompanied us for seven of the ten days. So rough was the sea during this time that for seven of the ten days we did not set our mess tables; we ate off our laps. On the ninth day we were pleased to be met by a little British destroyer named the *Mary Rose*. She picked us up early one morning and came along flying the international signal, 'Welcome to the American Colors.' To this we replied, 'Thank you, we are glad of your company.' The *Mary Rose* then accompanied us to Queenstown. I am sorry to say that three months later the *Mary Rose* was sunk with all hands by a German raider in the North Sea. We received a very hearty welcome at Queenstown by the British Admiral, Sir Lewis Bayly, and by the others in authority there. They were very glad to see us.

"Things were looking black. In the three previous weeks the submarines had sunk 152 British merchant ships. It

was manifest that this thing could not go on if the Allies were to win the war. The British Admiral gave us some wholesome advice in regard to how best to fight the submarines. We immediately prepared for this service by having what are known as depth charges or depth bombs installed. We put ashore all of our surplus stores and provisions in order to lighten our draft, as it was possible that a few inches might save us from striking a mine.

"The seriousness of the work before us was made evident, not only by the large number of vessels that were being sunk, but by the fact that the night before we entered the harbor a German submarine had planted twelve mines right in the channel. Fortunately for us, they were swept up by the ever-vigilant British mine sweepers before we arrived. The day following our arrival one of the British gunboats from our station was torpedoed and her captain and forty of her crew were lost. Patrol vessels were continually bringing in the survivors from the various ships as they were sunk."

Two conversations that were held between British and American officers about the time of the arrival of the flotilla bid fair to become historic. One was opened by Admiral Bayly at his first interview with his new allies.

"When will you be ready to go to sea?" he asked bluntly.

The question is one that is apt to be embarrassing to a navy officer, particularly to one commanding a destroyer. For the destroyer, despite its power for destruction, is a delicate piece of mechanism, apt to suffer severely in a hard voyage. Taus-

sig's flotilla had not escaped all damage. One ship had lost its fireroom ventilator, another had trouble with its condensers. But some patching up had been done on the voyage, and Taussig thought the Admiral a man with whom excuses would be poor policy, so he responded:

"We are ready now, sir, that is, as soon as we finish refueling. Of course you know how destroyers are—always wanting something done to them. But this is war, and we are ready to make the best of things and go to sea immediately."

Greatly pleased the Admiral gave them four days, and at the expiration of that time our ships were hunting the German shark.

British officers were greatly interested in the appearance of the American ships, which were rather more graceful and lithe in their lines than British vessels of the same class.

"You know," said one Briton to an American friend, "I like our destroyers' appearance better than yours. Ours look more sturdy and businesslike. Yours seem rather feminine in appearance."

"Well," responded the other, "that may be so, but you should remember what Kipling says, 'The female of the species is more deadly than the male.'"

Before describing the services of our destroyers in the war zone or recounting their manifold and exciting experiences with "Fritz," it will be worth while to explain the plan of campaign which it was

determined they should follow in the endeavor to defeat the purposes of the "vipers of the sea."

During the early months of the German submarine campaign the Allies were apparently unable to devise a systematic and effective method of meeting this new and grave peril. Arming neutral merchant ships, an expedient of which great things had been expected, proved largely futile. The strength of the submarine lay in its invisibility, and an armed merchantman could no more see beneath the surface of the ocean than could one unarmed. In six weeks of spring and early summer of 1917 thirty armed merchantmen were torpedoed and sunk off Queenstown and in no instance was a periscope sighted by the victim. A ship was visible to the commander of the U-boat peering through his periscope at the distance of fifteen miles; a lookout on a merchantman was especially sharp-eyed if he could pick up the periscope at a distance of a mile.

Where the arming of merchantmen really counted was in compelling the submarines to use their torpedoes. Lurking unseen below the surface the U-boat commander could tell whether or not a prospective victim was armed. If it showed no guns he would come boldly to the surface and attack it with his guns. For the weakness of the submarine lay in the limited number of torpedoes it could carry. Few were provided with more than twelve; more had only eight. These missiles were expensive and slow to manufacture. The greatest

economy in their use was enjoined upon every commander, and to a very great extent the cruising radius of the U-boats was determined by their supplies of torpedoes, for once they were exhausted there was nothing to be done but to return to the base. But no prudent U-boat commander would ever engage an armed merchantman on the surface with his own guns, for while the merchantman could stand a considerable pounding, one shot would put the submarine out of action. Accordingly, as a rule, the appearance of guns on the deck of a ship either led the submarine commander to abandon his attack altogether, or to destroy his victim with a torpedo, remaining himself submerged.

While the arming of merchant vessels had thus proved to be no complete solution of the problem presented to the Allies, the method of their anti-submarine campaign had thus far proved equally ineffective. Cruising about the illimitable ocean wastes and looking for submarines which would show at most a tube three inches in diameter sticking up from some square miles of ocean was a profitless pursuit. The area which the British sought to patrol around Queenstown alone comprised about twenty-five thousand square miles. As many destroyers could hardly have kept it clear, and England had but about ten or fifteen available after the Grand Fleet, the hospital ships, the Calais crossing and the Mediterranean were provided for. Of course this was an utterly in-

adequate force and the process of starving England by sinking her food ships was proceeding apace when an entirely new line of strategy was adopted about the time the Americans entered the war.

Admiral Sims describes the strategy by which the submarine was finally beaten as the substitution of a policy of making him come to the destroyer, for the earlier system which sent the destroyers out to hunt the unseen U-boat cruising silently beneath the surface of the sea. The method of the hunter of big carnivorous game was to be followed. A bait was to be set—in this instance a flotilla of ships which would attract the prowling U-boat to his doom. For with the improved devices for detecting and attacking the undersea raiders about all that was necessary was to have approximate knowledge of their whereabouts to accomplish their destruction. This plan, however, which involved gathering merchant vessels in convoys of as many as thirty or forty in a fleet and having them escorted through the danger zone by destroyers, and the even smaller “submarine chasers,” was not put into effect until the fall after the arrival of our first flotilla, and our men were at first given experience on submarine patrol under the general command of the British admiral. In these early days the task of our destroyer commanders was to search for submarines, to pick up survivors of attacks that had been reported by wireless, occasionally to escort single ships through

the danger zone, and to hurry to the rescue if word came of some vessel in danger.

The hunting for submarines was a rather fruitless occupation at the best, although the British information bureau had done wonders in the way of keeping track of the whereabouts of the pests. Amazing as it may seem the approximate location of every U-boat at sea was known, and its movements day by day recorded on a great chart at the British Admiralty. Many factors enabled the intelligence officers to collect this information. To begin with a submarine could seldom leave its base at Zeebrugge or Ostend without the fact being known to the British. The waters outside those ports are shallow and were kept heavily mined by the Allies, so that before a submarine could make its way out several surface ships would be occupied for several hours clearing a way for its passage. This would, of course, be reported by observant British aircraft. Every wireless message sent by Fritz—and he loved to talk—was picked up and analyzed by many British ships. A device known as the radio-direction finder enabled observers to determine the precise location from which any message was sent. Moreover, all the wireless operators on the innumerable merchant ships of the Allies which swarmed over the ocean were directed to send instantly to London headquarters the latitude and longitude of every submarine they might sight, whether it attacked or not. With all these data at hand the intelligence department at London kept a

watch on each submarine from the time it emerged from its base until it returned thereto—or was marked off the board as sunk.

A great chart was used to show the location of the fleets that were being convoyed toward England by watchful destroyers and the lurking submarines lying in wait for them. As the latter made but about ten knots an hour on the surface and less when submerged, it was not difficult to keep reasonably accurate records of their locations and to warn the approaching merchantmen of their danger.

A curious fact in connection with this work of the intelligence department was that several of the submarine commanders developed such distinctive personal traits that the studious observers could tell just who was operating in a given territory, and forecast with some degree of accuracy what his next move would be. Hans Rose, for example, the officer who brought the *U-53* to Newport, was well known to the officers of the intelligence service, although none of them ever saw him, during the war. It was the common remark when one boat would suddenly appear, torpedo in rapid succession half a dozen ships, and as suddenly vanish, "Well, old Hans is out again." He was never guilty as were some of his fellows of shelling or running down boats filled with helpless survivors of sunken ships. On the contrary, he would usually wait around until the boats were filled, pass them a tow line and keep them together until a destroyer

appeared in the offing. Then he would submerge, leaving them safe. But he was ready enough to fight when fighting was the play. It was he who torpedoed our destroyer *Jacob Jones*, of which exploit more later.

It was a part of the distinctly unselfish service that the United States rendered in this war that our forces on land for part of the time, and on sea throughout the war, were under command of officers of our allies. National pride was set aside in the sincere desire to do all that would contribute most to military and naval efficiency. Accordingly, our flotillas of destroyers, as fast as they reached Queenstown, passed into command of Admiral Bayly. He at once began to give the officers instruction as to tactics and methods drawn from the long and bitter experience of the British with the submarine foe. It was a counsel of incessant vigilance. There could be no relaxation, for none could tell at what moment or in what place the unseen foe might strike. The foe was brave even to desperation and full of cunning devices. To rush madly upon a periscope with the purpose of ramming the boat beneath it seemed good strategy, but beware lest the periscope be only a dummy attached to a mine which, when struck, would demolish the ship touching it. It was better to shell periscopes from a distance. The ordinary dictates of humanity must in many instances be disregarded. Should a ship be torpedoed the destroyer on guard must not go to the aid of the sur-

vivors—it must go after the submarine. There was danger in responding too unquestioningly to wireless calls for aid. They might come from a friendly ship in sore distress. But again they might be sent out by an enemy submarine as a trap. And floating boats apparently holding the exhausted survivors of some submarine attack must be warily studied from afar, for they too were often devices of the enemy to lure the victim within striking distance. Searchlights or, for that matter, any lights at all at night were banned. The risk of collision was less than that of attracting the attention of a watchful Hun. Smoking on deck was barred—even a cigarette might attract the foe. The course should always be “zig-zagged,” and anything like a regular order avoided. Above all things, the destroyer commanders were warned against under-rating their enemy who was described as dashing, cunning and resourceful.

The first flotilla of American destroyers went out on patrol four days after their arrival at Queenstown. May 17th a second detachment of six ships arrived, and thereafter nearly every week saw a new squadron coming into the harbor. It is a curious fact that while these ships were dispatched from our shores with the utmost secrecy, and even without opportunity for their men—who were largely college boys and other volunteers—to bid their people farewell, their coming was perfectly well known to the enemy. The first mines laid off the entrance to Queenstown harbor by the Germans

in many months were laid only a day or two before the arrival of our first flotilla. This might have seemed a mere coincidence but for the fact that just before the arrival of parent ships at intervals of several days the same thing occurred. The mines were swept up by the British and no damage resulted from them. On one occasion, just as a number of the American officers were dining with Admiral Bayly, a number of the mines were exploded with a prodigious uproar so near Admiralty House that the windows rattled. The Admiral dryly remarked that it was an indication of the warm welcome the enemy had prepared for the Yankee visitors.

All through the spring the American squadrons kept coming into Queenstown, and by July 5th we had thirty-four destroyers on that station, practically our full strength during the war. The greeting of the English people to our officers and men was the very heartiest. Seven years earlier Admiral Sims, speaking at a banquet in the Guildhall, had said, "If the time should ever come when the British Empire is menaced by a European coalition, Great Britain can rely upon the last ship, the last dollar, the last man and the last drop of blood of her kindred beyond the sea." It was an indiscreet thing for an American naval officer to say, and the Admiral was formally reprimanded by his government for it, although the vast majority of our people warmly applauded the sentiment and rejoiced that it had been spoken by a man in the

uniform of our navy. But after seven years the prophecy which officialdom had repudiated had come literally to pass and England recalled the words with enthusiasm. They were used as a text over moving pictures showing the arrival of our ships and served as the theme of innumerable newspaper articles.

Our destroyer base was maintained at Queens-town and the strength there, and in the neighboring Irish city of Cork, of the Sinn Fein or Irish revolutionary party, led to some unfortunate complications. The members of that order, who were greatly in the majority in that neighborhood were frankly hostile to Great Britain and friendly to Germany. They aided the enemy with information whenever possible, helped German spies to land in Ireland, and concealed them when there. Their plots were distinctly dangerous to the American navy, and they even strove to attack it from within. Knowing that we had many sailors, and some officers of Irish extraction they endeavored to enlist the sympathies of these in the Sinn Fein movement, but absolutely without success for the Yankee blue jackets had crossed the sea to fight the Hun and were not to be diverted from that purpose to take part in any family quarrel. As a result bad feeling grew. There were frequent af-frays on the streets, and in one of these a hooligan was killed under circumstances which led the Irish jury to speedily acquit the sailor who struck the blow. Often American sailors were seriously



A Flotilla of Destroyers Steaming Into Harbor



One of the Destroyers that Kept the "Sea Lanes" Open

beaten up by Irish mobs. Much of the trouble arose from the attention shown by American blue jackets to black-haired Irish colleens, and perhaps individual jealousy had its share in the assaults commonly ascribed to the machinations of Sinn Fein. At any rate the situation became so serious that Admiral Sims was compelled to declare the city of Cork out of bounds for sailors—much to the grief of the tradesmen of that town, who had found profit in the daily visits of men who had from \$200,000 to \$300,000 a month to spend. But the feeling was growing so strong that it was found that the jackies were getting weapons and preparing for a pitched battle with Sinn Fein, so Cork remained closed to our men until the close of the war. A picturesque feature of the case was that when it was found that the jackies could no longer go to the colleens of Cork the girls came to them. A daily afternoon train was established, and one returning about midnight. Known as “the doves’ express” these trains contributed greatly to the content of our sailors and their fair friends.

The Sinn Fein sentiment in Ireland led to all sorts of curious rumors as to the part the United States would take in freeing Ireland from British domination. On one occasion, Admiral Bayly desiring a brief vacation, the British Admiralty transferred his command to Admiral Sims. It was an international courtesy of an unprecedented character, for never before had a British fleet been under command of a foreign admiral. In pur-

suance of his new functions Admiral Sims went to Queenstown, took possession of Admiralty House and hoisted his flag over it, the flag of Admiral Bayly having previously been hauled down. From this slight interchange of courtesies rose a report that excited all Ireland—namely, that after a bitter quarrel between the two admirals the British commander had been violently ejected, and that the United States had taken over the government of the country and would at once expel the oppressors.

Despite these embarrassing and sometimes menacing conditions Queenstown remained our chief naval base throughout the war. We had at most times eight thousand seamen and officers there. From its port our destroyers went out on their trips so full of constant hardship, and which not infrequently ended in disaster. On a hillside back of it in a little cemetery lay the bodies of hundreds of the dead of the *Lusitania*, unidentified, or left there for one reason or another by their own people. This seemed to give the port especial fitness as the center of American activities for the punishment of the lurking U-boats, whose most dastardly exploit was the sinking of that unarmed passenger ship and the foul murder of hundreds of women and children traveling upon her on errands of peace.

CHAPTER IV

Protecting merchant ships.—Camouflage.—Aiming a torpedo.—
The depth bomb.—The listening device or hydroplane.—Sub-
marine chasers and college crews.—The convoy system.—
Hostility of merchant captains.—Method of the convoy.—
Capture of *U-58*.—Attack on the *Cassin*.—Loss of the *Jacob*
Jones and the *San Diego*.

OUR nation had to help feed its allies long before it was able to fight for them. And so during the long months occupied in raising and drilling our armies, preparatory to ferrying them to France, the navy was engaged in protecting the ships bearing food to England from the attacks of the enemy's underwater boats. It was not until after we had entered upon the war that this protection was made effective, and its efficiency then was accomplished more by a new system than by any new weapons.

Some of the most useful devices for outwitting, or for destroying the U-boat had been employed before we took up the fight. Most interesting among these was the device of "camouflage," or so painting vessels as to decrease their visibility or to disguise the direction in which they were proceeding. Though this was brought to a high point of perfection in this war, it did not originate then, nor was it confined to naval operations. Disguising or concealing ships, batteries or bodies of troops has

been a practice in every war. In the World War, however, the art had been developed into a science and had been given a new name drawn from the French which has passed into all languages.

Camouflage, so far as its application to ships is concerned, means the employment of paint on their hulls in such a way as either to make them blend with the sea and the horizon and become scarcely distinguishable at a distance, or to deceive the eye as to their proportions and the direction in which they are going. The former, known as the "dazzle" system, was in use chiefly by foreign navies while the latter was brought to its highest perfection in our own service. There was nothing new, of course, in the effort to make a ship difficult of detection at a distance. The war paint used by all navies for scores of years, known as "battleship gray" was an essay in this direction. But the new camouflage was something very different. Ships went out to sea striped like zebras or tigers, except that their stripes were of all the primary colors and ran at all angles on the hull. They were striped and spotted and streaked with red, yellow, blue, green, white and black in a way that seemed to the untrained observer to be dictated only by childish fancy but which was in fact in accordance with abstruse principles of optics which I shall not attempt to set forth here. But the effect at a distance was amazing. A ship thus decorated would sink into the gray of sky and sea and be practically undistinguishable. Or, if another type of camou-

flage was employed, she would seem to be steaming in a direction wholly different from the course she was actually following, or would perhaps appear to be a craft of perhaps three hundred feet in length when, in fact, she was over twice that long.

Disguising the direction in which a ship was progressing was a most effective guard against successful torpedo attack. For it destroyed the accuracy of the enemy's aim. It must be remembered that in launching a torpedo the missile is not aimed—the whole U-boat must be aimed at the intended victim as the torpedo tubes are stationary. To secure the proper direction the commander of the submarine must take successive sights of his victim, and accurately estimate her speed and the direction in which she is steaming. It is, of course, his study to get as near her as possible without attracting her attention. Accordingly after his first sight of the ship he submerges, having noted on a pad her present position and her course. After a few minutes under water, creeping up on her, he rises again, swiftly notes her position at that moment and again disappears, making his memorandum as before. After three or four such swift glimpses he is provided, unless his eyes have been deceived, with the data from which he can figure the exact point at which his torpedo will strike that swiftly moving hull. It was the business of the camouflours to deceive his eye. Whether the system actually accomplished this end or not was a matter of violent controversy in naval circles during the

war, and the question has not yet been determined to the conviction of all. "The effect of good camouflage was remarkable," wrote one American naval officer. "I have often looked at a fellow ship in the convoy on our quarter on exactly the same courses we were, but on account of her camouflage she appeared to be making right for us on a course at least forty-five degrees different from the one she was actually steering.

"The deception was remarkable even under such conditions as these and of course a U-boat with its hasty limited observation was much more likely to be fooled."

In the United States a regular organization of navy camoufleurs was formed and some of the most eminent artists of the time turned from the practice of "art for art's sake" to the laborious task of painting parti-colored stripes on huge steel ships for patriotism's sake. The Navy Department, by a series of investigations, convinced itself of the value of the camoufleur's art and all of our transports together with some of our fighting craft were thus decorated. An official report declared that an oil-tanker was so painted that she was almost invisible at a distance of three miles, while big liners of five hundred feet in length were treated to such bizarre coats that at a distance of four or five miles it was impossible to judge of their course. In fact, the art of camouflage seemed to have added a fourth to the three creatures of which John Hay wrote:

“There are three species of creatures that when they seem coming are going,
When they seem going they come,—diplomats, women and crabs.”

To which list might well be added the camouflaged ship.

The most effective single weapon in the offensive fight upon the U-boat was devised by British navy officers before the entrance of the United States upon the war. But the depth bomb, in the operation of which there is a tragic mystery that stimulates the imagination, was vigorously employed by our ships, and the curious Y-shaped guns which threw two of the “ash-cans” at once to starboard and port were familiar portions of the armament of our destroyers.

Every boy at all familiar with firearms knows that a rifle shot fired at the water at an angle is deflected, and even if fired straight down is so quickly deprived of any force that it will do no injury to a fish or a duck two feet or so beneath the surface. This fact made the submarines safe from gunshot as soon as they had sunk a few feet beneath the waves. Their foes might know precisely where they were, might indeed be able to see one clearly, but were unable to deliver any effective stroke. The same principle makes it needless to carry the armor of dreadnoughts more than three feet below the water line, and all the chief navies have been experimenting with a “non-riccochet-

ting" shell in the endeavor to find some way of piercing the water and the armor both.

The story is that one day a British cruiser in the North Sea narrowly escaped a torpedo from a submarine which was observed as it let fly its missile. Speeding to the spot the officers of the cruiser could see the long black hull of the submarine resting quietly on the bottom, perhaps forty feet below them but as safe as if it were forty miles away. A report of the incident was made to Admiral Jellicoe, with whom at the time was Admiral Madden.

"Wouldn't it have been great," said Madden, "if we'd had a mine aboard so designed that it would not explode until it had sunk to a certain depth? With that we could have put Fritz out of business easily."

This merely casual speculation gave the idea of the depth bomb, and the need being made known to the Admiralty experts the actual device was soon forthcoming. It was simplicity itself. A big steel cylinder was filled with TNT—the most powerful of all explosives. At the end of this cylinder was a screw, not unlike the propeller of a ship. As the huge shell sunk through the water the friction caused this screw to revolve, and as it did so it thrust a rod deeper and deeper into the shell. At a certain point, which could be fixed in advance by a simple device, the end of the rod came into contact with a detonator and the whole charge was set off. These depth bombs, or "ash-cans" as the sailors called them from their resemblance to that

harmless domestic utensil, were manufactured by the tens of thousands and formed part of the equipment of every warship in the submarine zone. At first they were merely dropped over the stern of the craft at the point where it was thought a submarine might be lurking, the ship itself speeding on at full steam lest she be caught by the explosion of her own bomb. But before long the curious double-barrel cannon, with the barrels extending to right and left like a Y, which with a light charge would throw the projectiles about fifty yards to either side of the boat came into common use. However courageous the crew of a destroyer might be they felt a certain comfort in knowing that the "ash-cans" would be well clear of their ship before the machinery for touching off the explosive began to work.

The effectiveness of the depth bomb rested upon a fundamental principle of physics with which every schoolboy is familiar, namely, that liquids submitted to pressure transmit that pressure undiminished in every direction. The water, instead of being a cushion to gradually take up the force of an explosion, transmitted that force to a very considerable distance so that a submarine within one hundred feet of an exploding depth bomb would have her plates driven inward, causing a fatal leak. Even when the explosion occurred at a greater distance the result was sure to be disastrous and sometimes fatal. For the submarine, terrible in offense, is a weakling in defense. A comparatively

slight shock served to injure the steering machinery, or put the lighting plant out of commission so that the crew would be left groping in darkness at the bottom of the sea. The effect of such a situation on the morale of the best crew can well be imagined. At any moment a second explosion may crush in the plates of their ship and drown them like rats. Or the machinery may have been so disorganized by the first shock that there remains no chance of reaching the surface and all must suffocate slowly and miserably. Even should the submarine commander determine to blow his tanks and rise to the surface, seeking mercy from his assailant, he could feel no certainty that a sudden shot before he was sufficiently out of water to indicate his surrender might not send him again to the bottom a hopeless wreck. For the nature of the submarine and the record made by its officers did not encourage trustfulness on the part of the Allied navy officers, and they were never slow to deliver the fatal stroke.

When to all these considerations was added the tremendous force of a depth-bomb explosion the effect of such an attack on the nerves of those sustaining it may well have been racking. Those who have been through it say that the concussion was as great as that attending the simultaneous firing of all the fourteen-inch guns of a battleship. Sometimes the submarine attacked would be within the radius of several of these explosions at the same time. German sailors who had been through this

experience came to the surface showing symptoms analogous to those of shell shock.

A submarine crushed at the bottom of the sea left no one to tell the story of the tragedy. Its dead could tell no tales. Once, at a time prior to the war, a Japanese submarine was disabled at the bottom of a harbor, and despite all efforts could not be raised in season to save the lives of her crew. With characteristic Japanese devotion to duty the captain of the doomed ship sat at his little table, and hour by hour wrote down the tale of the gradually wasting oxygen, the increasing difficulty of breathing, the deaths one after the other of his men, and—crowning evidence of discipline and devotion—took upon himself the blame for the disaster and besought the forgiveness of his Mikado. It was one of the touching human documents of all history.

But the Germans left none such. Our nearest approach to a knowledge of what occurred on a doomed submarine must be conjecture based upon what could be seen from above. Indeed it was not always possible to determine whether a "sub" had actually been destroyed even when the circumstances all seemed to point to its destruction. The British Admiralty was very skeptical of claims of this sort and the proof had to be incontrovertible before a destroyer commander would get credit for a "sub" destroyed.

A destroyer on patrol would frequently cruise for weeks without getting a sign of a submarine.

But when the cry came from the bridge "Periscope! Starboard bow!" there would be such a racing of men and machines as could never be seen in similar space elsewhere. The captain was on the bridge in half a minute glasses in hand sweeping the quarter of the sea indicated by the lookout.

"There it is. About 250 yards to starboard, sir."

Sure enough. A slender tube, little larger than the handle of a rake stood up about three feet above the surface of the sea, through which it was cutting, leaving a white wake behind. Even as he spoke it disappeared. Bells meantime were ringing in the engine room of the destroyer and the whirring of the great fans putting on the forced draft could be heard on deck. With a whirl of the wheel the captain turned the ship's prow toward the spot at which the tube had disappeared. Shrill whistles rang along the destroyer's decks and men came running to their posts at the guns, at the depth bombs and at the torpedo tubes. A command from the bridge and the Y-gun with a dull report tossed two bombs into the air to fall at about the spot where it was estimated the enemy might be lying. A small bright colored buoy also went overboard to mark the spot. The ship went speeding onward and none too fast, for soon the water astern lifted high in a pillar of green that quickly broke into white foam, while through the air resounded a deep boom mingled with the rush of many waters.

Had the engine of death found its mark? That was a question which none could answer for the

moment. The destroyer continued its cruising, dropping one or two more bombs, and keeping a vigilant eye for signs of distress from below. Before long these began to appear. Amidst the dead fish which plentifully besprinkled the ocean there appeared patches of oil, that made the ocean slick and greasy. But that was not definite proof. A submarine might lose a little oil without being seriously hurt. Moreover, some shrewd Hun commanders had been known to let out a few gallons of oil to make the destroyer think her job was done and no more depth bombs need be dropped. So oil, except in large quantities, had ceased to excite those who sought the death of the German shark. Bits of wooden wreckage coming to the surface count for more, but there is little wood in a submarine and one might long look for it in vain. It is probable that many a German submarine paid the last debt without the knowledge of the British collector.

An anti-submarine device which had its origin after the Americans "came in," and to the perfection of which our scientists contributed materially, was the listening device, or hydrophone which had reached such perfection by the close of the war that experienced navy officers said it furnished the final answer to the problem of the submarine.

The fact that water conveyed sound even more rapidly and more distinctly than the air had long been familiar to scientists and navigators. It had been made the basis for the submarine signals

which had been employed in the practical business of navigation. The Nantucket light-ship, for example, is fitted with submarine bells and ocean steamships coming from Europe often pick up the ship in this way in weather when the light is indistinguishable. The submarine telephone had been known before the war, but had been put to little practical use.

With these instruments as a guide it was not long before the navies of the Allied nations had perfected a device by which not only could the approach of a submarine be detected, but the direction from which she was coming and the distance were indicated with almost absolute accuracy. The United States took the lead in this work, which was participated in by scientists in our universities, navy officers and the research departments of our great electrical concerns. The British were frankly skeptical but permitted an officer of the United States navy to use certain of their vessels for experimental purposes late in the fall of 1887, when there was at least promise that the problem had been solved. His tests demonstrated the superiority of the American inventions known as "K-tubes" and "C-tubes," by which vessels could be detected at a distance of twenty miles. The British *Nash-fish* and *Shark-fin* were inferior in that they did not attempt to discover the direction from which the tell-tale sound came.

The chief trouble with these devices, and one that only long training on the part of the listener

could overcome, was the painstaking care with which they gathered up every sort of a sound that the ocean held in its mysterious depths and reported it to the listening ear. We think of the depths of the sea as a place of eternal silence. The hydrophone made it seem only a little quieter than Broadway. The subtle machine picked up every sound from the splash of the wave on top to the groan of a poor dead wreck on the bottom, swinging with the current and racking its old bones in torment. The men at the ear-pieces learned to discriminate between these voices of the deep. They learned that a queer swishing sound like escaping steam was not in any way connected with an enemy craft but indicated the playful progress of a school of porpoises. Whales caused considerable trouble, the sound of their great fins and tails resembling with curious accuracy that of a submarine's propeller. More than once an unhappy cetacean was blown to pieces by a torpedo or shell launched in his direction on the theory that he was a sneaking submarine.

All these weapons for the circumvention of the submarine presupposed the existence of a large fleet upon which they might be employed. That fleet neither the United States nor her allies possessed to the degree that was desirable. For it should be a fleet of destroyers. No other naval craft was swift and handy enough to fill the precise place. But of destroyers when we entered the war our navy possessed only 105. The British

navy was more adequately equipped, but, as has already been shown, the demand for its destroyers was so great as to leave only an insufficient number for the vital duty of guarding the food ships.

So it became at once necessary to supplement the fleets of destroyers with such vessels as could be raked and scraped up along the wharves and harbors, or could be built rapidly for this class of service. Yachts, often presented by their owners to the nation, furnished part of this new fleet. Small power boats, and especially swift racers that had been built for purposes of sport, were pressed into service for guard boats about our harbors at a time when it was feared the enemy might try to raid our shores. The most important service, however, was done by a class of boats known as submarine chasers, many of which were merely pleasure craft made over for this purpose, but most of which were specially built for the navy. Built of wood, the largest but 110 feet in length, while some were as small as 36 feet, these vessels could be constructed speedily, and by the time the war was approaching its end we had a fleet of several hundred. They were manned very largely by youths from the Naval Reserve—college undergraduates often—and they braved dangers and accomplished service that aroused the admiration of navy officers of all nations. All over the face of the waters they were scattered—from Queenstown to Corfu, with stations at Gibraltar, Plymouth and Brest. In all,

400 of these pigmy ships were built and about 170 were distributed along the European seas. Small though they were they drew blood, and Admiral Sims declares that several enemy submarines fell to their account and that "on the day that hostilities ceased, the Allies generally recognized that this tiny vessel with the 'listening devices' which made it so efficient, represented one of the most satisfactory 'direct answers' to the submarine which had been developed by the war. Had it not been that the war ended before enough destroyers could be spared from their convoy duty to assist with their greater speed and offensive power in hunting groups of these tiny craft it is certain that they would have soon become a still more important factor in destroying submarines and interfering with their operations."

The personnel of the submarine chasers—sometimes called "the suicide fleet" was picturesque. Very few were experienced sailors and of the officers fewer yet were Annapolis graduates—probably not more than five per cent. The sailors were gathered up from the Naval Reserve and the various training camps, and were mostly boys from the colleges, farms and shops of the middle west, entirely unused to salt water and the heaving surges of the ocean. There were some amateur yachtsmen among them, but the mass were the veriest land-lubbers. When the first squadron of 110-footers staggered into port at Queenstown after a winter trip across the Atlantic a considerable number of

the men—officers as well as jackies—had to be sent to the hospital for seasickness.

“Those boys can’t bring a ship across the ocean,” remarked some one to an American officer at Plymouth.

“Perhaps they can’t,” he answered, “but there is a flotilla of thirty-six in the harbor below you that they have just brought in.”

The great percentage of college boys among those who manned “the suicide fleet” was a source of pride to the service. They flocked to it from Yale, Harvard, Columbia and Princeton and from such “fresh water” colleges as Chicago and Michigan. Trained navy officers said after they had been given opportunity to get their sea-legs, that they rapidly overhauled the graduates of Annapolis in all the technical work of navigating their vessels, while having an initiative and a power to grapple with new and intricate problems which was not manifested by graduates of our naval academy. Admiral Sims was so impressed by this that he urged that hereafter a college education should be combined with a short intensive technical course at the naval academy. It is worthy of note that the submarine chasers built for the British government were carried across the Atlantic on the decks of ocean ships, while our boys took their craft across under their own power. It is true, however, that as a rule the British chasers were thirty feet shorter than our type.

At Corfu, just at the point where the Adriatic

opens into the Mediterranean through the narrow strait of Otranto, a flotilla of submarine chasers did some notable work during the last few months of the war. Thirty-six of these pigmy boats made the voyage from New London to Corfu under their own power, carefully shepherded of course by parent ships which carried stores of oil, for none of the little chasers could carry enough for fuel for more than two or three day's run. The oil was transhipped from the parent ship through hose while the vessels were all plowing along through the ocean at top speed, and frequently three of the baby fellows would be drawing their sustenance at the same moment. The voyage was made without loss, and in such trim were the little bantams of the sea that, sighting a periscope as they passed Gibraltar, they made a vigorous attack on the submarine with all the skill and dash of veterans.

The Adriatic, with its innumerable harbors and inlets, had been a great nest of Austrian submarines which, fitting out at Trieste, Durazzo or other ports under Austrian control would slip out into the Mediterranean and harry the British ships making for the Suez canal, or coming thither with food for the beleaguered British Isles. The Straits of Otranto, the one egress for these boats, were but forty miles wide, and thus not difficult to block. The water was very deep, more than half a mile, and for that reason a threatened submarine could not shield itself by lying on the bottom until pursuit had passed over. Accordingly it was de-

terminated by the Allies to put a barrage there that would effectually end the raids of the Austrian underwater boats. This barrage was maintained in four lines of craft. First came a line of destroyers intended to prevent any raiding of the barrage by Austrian cruisers or other surface boats. Then a line of trawlers steaming steadily back and forth. Next a line made up of drifters, motor boats and chasers, and finally a line of sailing craft. Our men entered upon this service on the 18th of July, 1918, and discharged the monotonous duty of the patrol until the armistice, four months later. The effect of the barrage was to put a summary end to Austrian submarine activities. Austrian reports obtained after the close of the war showed that six submarines had been sunk during our participation in the barrage, but how many were to be credited to our men, and how many to the British cannot be determined. It was reported, however, that two weeks after the establishment of the barrage the Austrian crews mutinied and refused to attempt its passage declaring that it was certain death.

Probably the most exciting service participated in by the crews of our chasers in the Adriatic was the bombardment of Durazzo in September, 1918. This picturesque Albanian town had served throughout the war as a base whereby Germany and Austria had sent supplies to Bulgaria. Late in the war the Allies had made up their minds to attack Bulgaria, a decision which might well have

been reached long before. The first step was to destroy the base at Durazzo, and accordingly plans were made for its bombardment by British and Italian ships. In the actual bombardment the chasers with their pigmy guns could of course take no part, but to them was assigned the duty of patrolling steadily between the bombarding squadron and the harbor's mouth in order to intercept the submarines which the Austrians would unquestionably send out to attack the Allied fleet. To this duty twelve of the little ships were assigned.

It was the purpose of the Allies simply to destroy the docks, storehouses and railroad sidings by the side of the harbor. The picturesque old town itself they would spare—not having the German lust for destruction for mere vandalism's sake. It was thought that two hour's shelling would accomplish the end sought. Three Italian battle cruisers were to begin the work, retiring at the end of an hour for three British light cruisers that would complete it. While the town and harbor were heavily fortified it was not thought that much danger need be apprehended from the shore batteries. But the Austrians had a large force of submarines in the port and it was to guard against these that the American sub-chasers, manned and officered by college boys, were called into action.

Under command of Captain C. P. Nelson the American chasers steamed from their base at Corfu to the Italian port of Drindisi, where they met the larger vessels of the British and Italian navies that

were to undertake the bombardment. Thence it was a straight steam of several hours across the Adriatic to the threatened port. The chasers led the fleet and, as they made no attempt to slow up for the larger vessels, came in sight of Durazzo while the main fleet was still hull down below the horizon. There were known to be a number of Austrian destroyers within the harbor and Captain Nelson flaunted his almost defenseless chasers about its mouth in the hope that he might decoy some of the enemy out long enough for the fleet to come up and capture them. But the enemy was wary. Probably they knew well enough how much of a force was coming up out of the west, for whatever department of the Teutons in the war may have been inefficient, it was not the Intelligence Department. At any rate the foe was not to be coaxed out by false pretenses, and before long the sight of the on-coming fleet put an end to any hope of imposing upon him.

Durazzo lies at the foot of a small gulf, about fifteen miles wide at its opening. Outside the line of the capes the cruisers steamed back and forth delivering their fire upon the docks, and the men-of-war lying at them. Closer to the shore were the chasers, with the water about them springing into foam as the shore batteries turned their guns on these frail craft, none of which could have withstood the impact of a single four-inch shell. Each chaser kept directly abeam of the cruiser it had to protect and all eyes on the little craft were strained

to discover the telltale signs of a hostile submarine. When you think of it that is not such an easy task for a bunch of college boys on a yacht-like boat, with the shells from a line of cruisers shrieking over their heads, and the missiles from half a dozen shore batteries beating the water into foam on all sides of them. What they had to look for was a slender tube, not more than three inches in diameter, slipping through the water. Not an object to at once attract attention at best. But with all the rest of the panorama to distract attention it would have been little wonder if the slinking Hun had got out to sea without detection. But he did not.

Suddenly the last boat in the line of chasers, *No. 129* was its romantic name, was seen to turn suddenly on its course and go chasing madly off in precisely the opposite direction to that on which her course had been laid. She flew no signal to explain the sudden change, but on all the other boats every one knew that a torpedo had been sighted. On *No. 215*, her nearest neighbor, discussion as to whether they should go to her aid was suddenly stopped by the appearance of a cleft in the smooth water such as would be made by the dorsal fin of a big shark. It was moving swiftly toward the nearest British cruiser. "Here's our sub!" was the cry, and in a moment with the gyrations of *No. 129* forgotten *No. 215* and *No. 128* were turning their guns loose on this foe. The second shot from the former chaser apparently hit the periscope, and

the submarine began to submerge. But the two chasers were on him like a pack of dogs on a hare run to earth. Depth bombs were flying to either side from their Y-guns and the water all about was being thrown up in great geysers as the sea was torn to pieces in the search for the lurking enemy. At last with the foam there came flying up bits of steel and wood and wreckage of all kinds. It was apparent that one submarine had been done for.

Then it was time to look for *No. 129* that had opened the ball. Off in the distance she was descried showing a signal, "My engines disabled." Proceeding to her aid Commander Bastido, in command of the flotilla, asked what had become of the submarine.

"We smashed it," was the reply. So swift had been the rush of the chaser upon its prey that before the submarine could sink from sight her enemy was above her, and dropped eight bombs which soon brought to the surface the wreckage which told of the end of one more viper of the sea.

Two submarines in an hour's work was the record of the chasers, manned by college boys, on that day off Durazzo. From both the British and Italian high naval commands came words of applause and thanks. This was the Italian message:

"Italian Naval General Staff expresses highest appreciation of useful and efficient work performed by United States chasers in protecting major vessels during action against Durazzo; also vivid admiration of their brilliant and

clever operations which resulted in sinking two enemy submarines."

In the early spring of 1918, by common consent among the Allied navies, the craft intrusted with the work of protecting merchantmen from submarines, and hunting the latter down, were the destroyers and the submarine chasers. To these to some extent were added submarines themselves, and the so-called mystery ships with which the United States navy had but a slight experience. The depth bomb and the listening device made of these various craft effective enemies of the submarine, despite its invisibility and stealth.

It was not altogether the increasing efficiency of these weapons and the rapid multiplication of the craft employing them that ultimately defeated the underseas campaign of the Hun and saved the Allies from defeat. The decrease in the number of sinkings of food ships, and the consequent renewal of the confidence of the Allies in ultimate victory began when the Allied war council enforced upon the merchantmen of the world the principle of the convoy, and supplied the armed vessels necessary to convoy those ships through the danger zone.

The idea of grouping merchant vessels in considerable fleets and having them escorted by warships in time of war is no new thing. It has been practiced in all periods of the world's history, and particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the Spanish galleons bringing bullion

from the mines of Mexico and Peru were thus guarded against the buccaneers and scarcely less predatory warships of England and France.

During the period of the greatest submarine activity the attention of navy men was attracted to the fact that while merchant ships were being torpedoed to the amount of five hundred thousand tons or more a month the great battleships of the British navy, against which the enemy had every reason to exert his fullest powers of destruction, were virtually immune. Early in the war it is true, three British cruisers, the *Cressy*, *Hogue* and *Aboukir*, had been torpedoed in the same attack by the intrepid German *Weddigen*, and later the *Audacious* had been blown up in the Irish Sea, but the latter disaster was believed to be due to a mine. The main fleet was immune—and not only when it was lying at anchor in Scapa Flow, but even when it was ranging the North Sea in futile invitation to the enemy to come out and fight. Now this immunity could only be ascribed to one thing—the fact that at all times every battleship was attended by her own cordon of destroyers, ceaselessly circling about her, and on the alert all the time for any sign of a “sub.”

Shortly after Admiral Sims joined the Allied naval council in London on behalf of the United States he pointed out these facts to his associates, and declared that the plain lesson to be learned from them was that the merchant ships, now so vital to Allied safety, should be grouped as were

the naval vessels, and like them be guarded by destroyers or other small craft. While agreeing with him the other members of the council insisted that, even if enough destroyers were available for this purpose, the captains of the merchantmen would not agree to be bound by the rules of the convoy. When the plan was first broached to these seamen they did in fact oppose it. They declared that sailing in specified order was an art in which navy officers had been trained all their lives, and that while it might be easy enough for them it was not part of a merchant sailor's education. Moreover, the merchant ships were not equipped for maintaining precisely the same rate of speed, nor were they so swift to answer their helms as men-of-war. It might be possible for a fleet of twenty men-of-war to steam in zigzag order, without lights, and through the blackness of a tempestuous night without disaster, but if a merchant fleet undertook it the wreckage would put the most active submarine to shame. The captains of fast vessels complained that under the convoy system they would have to adjust their speed to that of the slowest ship in the line and thus lose time—which is money. And all protested against the loss of time involved in holding ships in port until twenty or more could be ready to sail at once. A formal conference of merchant captains called at London to consider the convoy plan voted against it to a man. It may be noted in passing that after it was adopted and made compulsory it was most difficult to keep

these old sea-dogs obedient to the rules of the convoy and that most of the losses occurring thereafter resulted from some one of them breaking convoy with the idea that he could make better speed by himself.

Navy officers were keen for the plan. They believed not only that it would result in getting the merchantmen past the submarines with a greater percentage of safety, but that the rich convoys would act as a bait, bringing the sinister and stealthy undersea boats within striking distance. They were tired of roaming the broad and desolate expanse of sea week after week in the faint hope of catching a glimpse of a periscope. Under the proposed system the submarines would have to come where the destroyers would be, or go out of business altogether—and knowing how completely the Hun was relying upon his submarine campaign to win the war they were convinced that he would not be slow in coming to the attack.

With the navy strongly for the plan it was determined to give it a trial despite the opposition of the merchant marine. Accordingly a test was made with a fleet of eight-knot ships that were assembled at Gibraltar. Under command of captains strongly prejudiced against the plan, convoyed by a sufficient number of destroyers, this flotilla made the voyage safely through the very part of the sea that was most infested with submarines without loss. On the way, and before reaching the most dangerous waters the fleet was drilled in all the



A Camouflaged Cargo Ship

arts of evading the submarine, and the doughty merchant captains discovered that they could do all the things that they had insisted were impossible. They could run at night without lights. They could keep distance like a fleet of cruisers. They could zigzag in a way to madden a Hun trying to keep tab on them through a periscope. With the conclusion of this experiment the method of beating the submarine was no longer in doubt. Thereafter all merchant ships bound for England or France traveled the seas in fleets and under convoy.

It need not be thought, however, that the enemy accepted this situation with resignation, or admitted that the new system was a complete block to the activities of his submarines. Instead he did just what the Allied navy officers had hoped. He sent his U-boats up against the watchful rings of submarines, and not always without success. As a rule, however, the ships lost after this system was adopted were those commanded by captains who rashly broke out of the safe restraints of the convoy.

The fleets convoyed across the Atlantic were accompanied from the American side as far as the point in European waters where the submarines were apt to be encountered by a cruiser. This was to guard them against the chance that the Germans might have been able to slip a single armed ship out to sea, past the watchful British blockade. What a single ship could do to the merchant ship-

ping of the world had been shown early in the war by the exploits of the German raider, *Emden*, until she was run down and sunk by a British cruiser. A fleet of twenty to thirty merchantmen—no unusual number to be gathered—would have been a fine prize for a single armed raider had Germany been able to get even one to sea.

The master of each merchantman in a convoy was given a book containing full directions for his action in every conceivable emergency. Sometimes a lecture was given by the captain of the convoy before putting to sea, in order that all might know exactly what was expected of them. All the way across the Atlantic the fleet was drilled in the tactics that would become necessary when the danger zone was reached. As a rule it was a heterogeneous fleet, comprising among its units trim fleet liners, rusty tramps and lumbering cargo boats. There might be ships there capable of twenty knots an hour condemned to loaf along in the company of others that could only do eight or ten when pushed. The temptation was strong upon the swift ones to break away under cover of night and make a dash for port. Sometimes they yielded to the temptation, and usually with fatal results, for the Hun was ever watching for a sheep that might stray without the fold.

As the bunch of vessels steamed along across the ocean their masters learned the art of steering without lights, of zigzagging, of making sudden turns in the face of threatened danger. The crews

were drilled in what to do if attacked, how to act if a torpedo landed in their engine room and there were but a few minutes before the sinking of the ship. Now and then the wails of the siren on the escorting cruiser told of a submarine. It might be an actual attack or only a false alarm for the purpose of more drills. But in any event heed had to be taken of it, and all the maneuvers prescribed duly performed.

The responsibility upon the navy officer who was the commander of the whole convoy was a heavy one. As a rule he sailed by orders from the Navy Department, given him sealed and not to be opened until he had reached a certain point in the ocean. This was to avert any possibility of a leak by which the enemy might be enabled to meet the convoy with their submarines. Meantime, on the other side, the commanders of the destroyer flotillas would be getting their orders to meet the oncoming convoy at some specified point—off the west coast of Ireland if the ships were making for English ports, or to the southwest of the English Channel if French ports were their destination. To pick up a convoy was itself no small feat of seamanship. It is true that a fleet of ships, spread out and guarded, would cover a space of nearly ten miles square. But even at that, if the weather were thick and the sea running high, the searching destroyers were often hard put to it to find the ships which they were to escort into port. Once the destroyers had found their charges and taken up position on

the flanks and in the van, the cruiser which had accompanied the fleet across put on all speed and made for her European port, there to coal with all rapidity and return with another flotilla of ships—this time mostly empty for during the war there were few west-bound cargoes.

Once in the danger zone, with the destroyers watchfully shepherding them the fleet would close up. From occupying a space of perhaps ten miles square it would now be compressed into a square mile. If there were twenty-four ships in the fleet they would be arranged in rows of four vessels each, steaming side by side about half a mile apart, and with about five hundred yards between the lines. Usually the destroyers steamed along the side lines, for from that direction torpedo attack might be expected, while one brought up the rear partly to watch for submarines and partly to head off any adventurous skipper who might be tempted to break away from the convoy. The system of convoys was practically identical for troop ships and for merchantmen. The former, however, had additional protection in that they were themselves usually armed. That they enjoyed greater immunity from enemy attack during the time our army was being ferried to France was partly due to the eagerness of the Germans to accomplish the starvation of England, which meant the concentration of their submarine attack upon food ships, and partly to the desire of German diplomats to have the United States as little hostile as might be when

the time for formulating a peace agreement should arrive.

Most of the work of the men on convoy was dismally monotonous. Watching day after day for submarines that never appeared was stupid work and however much all hands may have desired to fulfill the immediate duty, which was to get the ships in their charge out of the danger zone in safety, most of them welcomed an attack as a relief to the tedium. But every now and then they had excitement enough.

One of the first engagements in which a destroyer participated, and perhaps the most glorious of all, was the capture by the *Fanning*, the destroyer *Nicholson* aiding, of the German submarine *U-58*. It was November 24, 1917, that a convoy of eight large ships put forth from Queenstown. It was, as usual, accompanied by a group of destroyers that were to take it out of the danger zone and bring in a fleet then steaming from the west. That was the time of the very greatest activity among the submarines, and this convoy had scarcely passed out through the net that barred the entrance to the harbor when the cry, "Periscope!", was raised by Coxswain David D. Loomis on the bridge of the *Fanning*. The day was fine. The sea smooth, and the fleet had scarcely settled down to its established order when this warning of impending attack was raised. The periscope that had been sighted was almost instantly withdrawn. Probably the Hun, while he saw the merchantman

Welshman directly ahead of him and in an admirable position for a fatal shot, also saw the *Fanning* and wished to take no chances.

Then was displayed the advantage of the constant drill to which the commanders and men of the submarines had been subjected since the opening of the war. The emergency had arrived and they knew exactly how to act. The submarine had fired no torpedo, so there was no wake to tell of its whereabouts. The vanished periscope had left no tell-tale mark. To reach the spot at which that slender tube had disappeared, the *Fanning* had to make a long, sweeping curve—for these vessels, responsive as they are to their helm, cannot spin as on a pivot. To hold in mind the spot at which the enemy had gone down and to drop his death bombs there was the task that confronted the officer of the deck, Lieutenant Walter S. Henry. As events proved he located the spot with accuracy. The depth bomb that went over the stern as the *Fanning* sped over the point at which the submarine was thought to be lurking exploded with such force as to shake up seriously the ship that dropped it. Meantime the *Nicholson*, which had had a longer course to follow to reach the scene, had come up and was scattering bombs in a way to disquiet any submerged Hun. Then followed events which puzzled the sub-hunters. Though they were reasonably sure that their bombs had been dropped at the proper point they waited in vain for any sign of oil, or other evidence that the prey had been hit.

Just as they were about to give it up as a failure the placid sea was ruffled, and the stern of the U-boat appeared rising slowly above the sea. Gradually the conning tower appeared, and then the rest of the boat, until its entire hull, seemingly undamaged, was on the surface of the water. The stranger was in a precarious position for a moment for the two destroyers, after a brief hesitation, began firing upon it, when suddenly the top of the conning tower opened. The two arms of the German commander appeared extended to heaven in token of submission, followed promptly by his body, and shouts of "Kamerad" from the still unseen crew. A forward hatch was speedily thrown off and some twenty German sailors came up through it one by one, like gnomes in a pantomime, each one raising high his arms and crying "Kamerad" at the top of his lusty lungs. Just why the apparently uninjured boat had surrendered, when it was comfortably submerged, and might have made its escape, puzzled the Americans, who stood to their guns while their officers ranged the two destroyers cautiously up beside the captive. As it turned out a little less caution and a little more severity might have been wise, for two of the Germans, wholly indifferent to the fact that they had surrendered and were holding their lives at the mercy of the victors, slipped from the deck below, and opened the sea-cocks. While the parley was still in progress the vessel began to settle in the water, and presently dropped away from under the

feet of the line of Huns on deck. Most of these leaped into the water and began swimming toward the two American vessels. In all there were thirty-nine men in the water and the Yankee blue jackets had a lively time in getting them out with ropes and life-belts thrown to them. Two or three were caught in the deck hamper of the sinking craft and went down with it for a time, but in the end all were cleared and rescued. There was comment among the American sailors on the very different way in which the crews of enemy submarines had treated the survivors of the merchantmen they had been sinking for nearly four years. To pick up a struggling English, French or American sailor had been a thing unknown. The more common practice had been to run down, or to shell the boats in which they had taken refuge. But all of these Germans were carefully helped from the sea, and when one, swimming, proved to be too weak to tie the life-line under his arms, an American tar, Coxswain Conner, leaped overboard and helped him as though he had been a shipmate. This humane action on the part of the American sailors was the more creditable since they had every reason to be enraged by the action of the foe in sinking his ship, after he had surrendered and begged for quarter.

According to the reports of sailors on the victorious ship the captured officers were sulky, the men elated beyond measure, happy to be thus out of the war and hopeful that they would be sent to America as prisoners. Many said that they in-

tended to live in that country after the war, as they had had enough of imperialistic Germany. But they were bitterly disappointed to learn that their imprisonment would be in England as the American navy had something better to do than ferrying Boches across the wide Atlantic.

The mystery of the surrender of a seemingly uninjured submarine was explained by its captain who said that while the explosions of the depth bombs had not broken the skin of the ship, nor started any leaks, it had raised general havoc with her internal mechanism. When the shock of the explosion was felt he was greatly relieved to find that no leak had been started, and, as was the usual practice, he swung her nose down to the diving position thinking to find bottom and there look for any possible internal damage. But when she had gone down two hundred feet without finding bottom, he saw that the sea was too deep and tried to check her descent. She refused to check. The officers looked significantly at the depth gages, knowing that if the craft sunk much further the pressure of the water would crush her sides like egg-shells and all would be drowned. One after the other all devices for stopping her descent and still keeping her safely below the surface and protected from the American guns was tried. All failed. There was but one recourse—to blow out the water ballast, and let her rise and surrender. That in itself was rather a counsel of desperation, for there is always a period between the appear-

ance of the top of a conning tower and the moment at which the commander can emerge and make his surrender known. That time is ample for a single well-directed shot from a watchful gunner to send the U-boat back again to the depths which she is trying to escape. And the record of treachery made by the German submarine commanders during the war was not such as to lead an Allied commander to wait very long to learn whether a sub was coming up to surrender or not. It might be coming up to launch another torpedo and it was his business to strike first.

In the case of the *U-58* luck was with the Germans, and all survived their defeat except one man who became so exhausted in the water that he died on the deck of the *Fanning*. All were taken ashore and turned over to the British. The exploit of the American destroyers won for them dispatches of congratulation from both Admiral Bayly and Admiral Sims. There was some amusement in the wardrooms over the characteristic way in which the latter ended his note. "Go out and do it again!" said the American Admiral, and every man in the destroyer flotilla wanted to give literal obedience to the injunction.

But no naval service is an uninterrupted record of triumph. In October of 1917 the destroyer *Cassin*, Commander Walter H. Vernou, narrowly escaped destruction by a torpedo which blew off thirty-five feet of the stern. The destroyer was not at the time on convoy work but was patrolling the

sea off the west coast of Ireland when a wireless notified her of the presence of a submarine some miles away. Under forced draught with every eye on the ship eagerly scanning the waste of waters she sped for the scene. Then came evidence of the great advantage which invisibility gives to the U-boat. For while the *Cassin* could make out no sign of the enemy it was suddenly made evident that the Boche could see her. I will let the official report tell the story:

“At about 1:57 P.M. the commanding officer sighted a torpedo apparently shortly after it had been fired, running near the surface and in a direction that was estimated would make a hit either in the engine or fire room. When first seen the torpedo was between 300 and 400 yards from the ship, and the wake could be followed on the other side for about 400 yards. The torpedo was running at high speed, at least 35 knots. The *Cassin* was maneuvering to dodge the torpedo, double emergency full speed ahead having been signaled from the engine room and the rudder put hard left as soon as the torpedo was sighted. It looked for the moment as though the torpedo would pass astern. When about 15 or 20 feet away the torpedo porpoised, completely leaving the water and sheering to the left. Before again taking the water the torpedo hit the ship well aft on the port side about frame 163 and above the water line. Almost immediately after the explosion of the torpedo the depth charges, located on the stern and ready for firing, exploded. There were two distinct explosions in quick succession after the torpedo hit.

“But one life was lost. Osmond K. Ingram, gunner's mate first class, was cleaning the muzzle of No. 4 gun, tar-

get practice being just over when the attack occurred. With rare presence of mind, realizing that the torpedo was about to strike the part of the ship where the depth charges were stored and that the setting off of these explosives might sink the ship, Ingram, immediately seeing the danger, ran aft to strip these charges and throw them overboard. He was blown to pieces when the torpedo struck. Thus Ingram sacrificed his life in performing a duty which he believed would save his ship and the lives of the officers and men on board.

“Nine members of the crew received minor injuries.

“After the ship was hit, the crew was kept at general quarters.

“The executive officer and engineer officer inspected the parts of the ship that were damaged, and those adjacent to the damage. It was found that the engine and fire rooms and after magazine were intact and that the engines could be worked; but that the ship could not be steered, the rudder having been blown off and the stern blown to starboard. The ship continued to turn to starboard in a circle. In an effort to put the ship on a course by the use of the engines, something carried away which put the starboard engine out of commission. The port engine was kept going at slow speed. The ship, being absolutely unmanageable, sometimes turned in a circle and at times held an approximate course for several minutes.

“Immediately after the ship was torpedoed the radio was out of commission. The radio officer and radio electrician chief managed to improvise a temporary auxiliary antenna. The generators were out of commission for a short time after the explosion, the ship being in darkness below.

“When this vessel was torpedoed, there was another

United States destroyer, name unknown, within signal distance. She had acknowledged our call by searchlight before we were torpedoed. After being torpedoed, an attempt was made to signal her by searchlight, flag, and whistle, and the distress signal was hoisted. Apparently through a misunderstanding she steamed away and was lost sight of.

“At about 2:30 P.M., when we were in approximately the same position as when torpedoed, a submarine conning tower was sighted on port beam, distant about 1,500 yards, ship still circling under port engine. Opened fire with No. 2 gun, firing four rounds. Submarine submerged and was not seen again. Two shots struck very close to submarine.”

After a savage struggle with the sea, the shattered *Cassin* was finally towed into port. That she should have been saved was little short of marvelous and that but one man was lost—and that one because he deliberately sacrificed his life to save his fellows—is even more remarkable. Fully 850 pounds of TNT was exploded on or near the ship's fantail, including the torpedo itself and the two depth mines that were stowed there. As a result, thirty-five feet of the stern was blown off, carrying with it all the clothing of the crew. One gun was blown overboard. Although there were more than twenty men in the wrecked living compartments all escaped with only minor injuries. One fireman was asleep in his bunk, on the side where the torpedo struck and only a few feet forward of the point of impact. Steel plates were torn apart, and rivets sheered off directly alongside his

body. Unhurt, but dazed, he climbed to his feet, made his way through three compartments to the deck, climbed the ladder in a state of unconsciousness, and was well on his way to his station before he came to himself and grasped the fact of the explosion. It was a clear case of the subconscious mind doing the routine acts which discipline had made a real part of its being. The official report continues:

“Others caught below in the crew space probably did their duty of dogging the water-tight doors from a like cause and in a similar state. The two doors leading into the after compartment, and the door between the C. P. O.’s (chief petty officers’) quarters and the engine-room P. O.’s (petty officer’s) quarters were all found firmly and perfectly dogged. Yet all the men escaping up the ladder from this deck declared that from the first instant of the explosion they had been absolutely blinded. Seven men were in the after space, and about the same number in each of the two others.

“Of the two after doors, that to port threatened to carry away soon after the seas began to pound in. The main mass of wreckage which dropped off did so upward of an hour after the explosions. It was at this time that the bulkhead began to buckle and the port door and dogging weaken. It was shored with mattresses under the personal direction of the executive. Up to this time and until the seas began to crumple the bulkhead completely, there was only a few inches of water in the two P. O. compartments; and even when the *Cassin* reached Queenstown, hardly more than three feet. None of the compartments directly under these three on the deck below—handling room, magazine

and oil tanks—were injured at all. The tanks were farthest aft, and were pumped out after docking.

“One piece of metal entered the wash room and before coming to rest completely circled it without touching a man who was standing in the center of the compartment. Another stray piece tore a 6-inch hole in one of the stacks.

“The destroyer within signal distance at the time of the attack was the U. S. S. *Porter*. It is believed that she saw the explosion, at least of the two depth charges, and thinking that the *Cassin* was attacking a submarine, started off scouting before a signal could be sent and after the radio was out of commission.”

I have said that the only man killed on board the *Cassin* deliberately sacrificed his life in the discharge of his duty and that his fellows might be saved. Let the Secretary of the Navy tell the story, as he did in an address at Yale University:

“The deed of Osmond K. Ingram ranks with those that give splendor to our humanity. He was a gunner’s mate in the intrepid *Cassin*, when the Captain searching for submarines, espied one he started full speed ahead toward the enemy. Suddenly he sighted a torpedo about 400 yards away, running at high speed, and headed to strike his vessel amidships. Realizing the situation, the cool captain rang for emergency speed on both engines. In that moment an enlisted man of the navy rose to the heroic demand of the peril. Seeing the torpedo coming toward the stern of the ship where his gun was located, Ingram, with rare presence of mind, realized the additional danger if the missile struck where certain high explosives were stored. He speedily ran aft and threw the depth charges into the sea,

before the torpedo struck. The ship was hit, but the *Cassin* and his comrades were saved. Ingram lost his own life. He was the only man who did not answer to the next roll-call on the ship. But he answered to the roll-call of the immortals, and soon a destroyer bearing his name will sail the seas."

In fact, at the first opportunity, the Secretary conferred the name of the *Cassin's* hero upon a new destroyer.

The first serious disaster came to the destroyer fleet in the loss of the *Jacob Jones*, December 6, 1917, after our ships had been patrolling the danger zone for more than seven months. The ship which was under the command of Lieutenant David W. Bagley, whose brother had been the first American naval officer killed in the war with Spain, was returning to Queenstown from having escorted a convoy out of the infested area. Steaming along, not unsuspectingly, but with every eye alert for the enemy, she suddenly received a fatal stroke. Long after it was learned that the redoubtable Captain Rose of the *U-53*, the same who brought his ship to Newport before the war, had launched the torpedo from a distance of more than two miles. At that distance his periscope could, of course, not be seen. At the same time it was by the merest chance that his shot proved effective, for a torpedo cannot be counted on for much more than a mile. But this time an accurate aim, and a fair measure of luck, helped the Germans. The story is best told in Commander Bagley's report:

“At 4:21 P.M. on December 6, 1917, in latitude 49-23 north, longitude 6-13 west, clear weather, smooth sea speed 13 knots zigzagging, the U. S. S. *Jacob Jones* was struck on the starboard side by a torpedo from an enemy submarine. The ship was one of six of an escorting group which were returning independently from off Brest to Queenstown. All other ships of the group were out of sight ahead.

“I was in the chart house and heard some one call out ‘Torpedo.’ I jumped at once to the bridge, and on the way up saw the torpedo about 800 yards from the ship approaching from about one point abaft the starboard beam headed for a point about amidships, making a perfectly straight surface run (alternately broaching and submerging to apparently four or five feet), at an estimated speed of at least 40 knots. No periscope was sighted. When I reached the bridge I found that the officer of the deck had already put the rudder hard left and rung up emergency speed on the engine-room telegraph. The ship had already begun to swing to the left. I personally rang up emergency speed again and then turned to watch the torpedo. The executive officer, Lieutenant Norman Scott, left the chart house just ahead of me, saw the torpedo immediately on getting outside the door, and estimates that the torpedo when he sighted it was 1,000 yards away, approaching from one point, or slightly less, abaft the beam and making exceedingly high speed.

“After seeing the torpedo and realizing the straight run, line of approach, and high speed it was making, I was convinced that it was impossible to maneuver to avoid it. Lieutenant (junior grade) S. F. Kalk was officer of the deck at the time, and I consider that he took correct and especially prompt measures in maneuvering to avoid the torpedo. Lieutenant Kalk was a very able officer, calm and

collected in emergency. He had been attached to the ship for about two months and had shown especial aptitude. His action in this emergency entirely justified my confidence in him. I deeply regret to state that he was lost as a result of the torpedoing of the ship, dying of exposure on one of the rafts.

“The torpedo broached and jumped clear of the water at a short distance from the ship, submerged about 50 or 60 feet from the ship, and struck approximately three feet below the water line in the fuel-oil tank between the auxiliary room and the after crew space. The ship settled aft immediately after being torpedoed to a point at which the deck just forward of the after deck house was awash, and then more gradually until the deck abreast the engine-room hatch was awash. A man on watch in the engine-room, D. R. Carter, oiler, attempted to close the water-tight door between the auxiliary room and the engine room, but was unable to do so against the pressure of water from the auxiliary room.

“The deck over the forward part of the after crew space and over the fuel-oil tank just forward of it was blown clear for a space athwartships of about 20 feet from starboard to port, and the auxiliary room wrecked. The starboard after torpedo tube was blown into the air. No fuel oil ignited and, apparently, no ammunition exploded. The depth charges in the chutes aft were set on ready and exploded after the stern sank. It was impossible to get to them to set them on safe as they were under water. Immediately the ship was torpedoed, Lieutenant J. K. Richards, the gunnery officer, rushed aft to attempt to set the charges on ‘safe,’ but was unable to get further aft than the after deck house.

“As soon as the torpedo struck I attempted to send out an ‘S. O. S.’ message by radio, but the mainmast was car-

ried away, antennae falling, and all electric power had failed. I then tried to have the gun-sight lighting batteries connected up in an effort to send out a low-power message with them, but it was at once evident that this would not be practicable before the ship sank. There was no other vessel in sight, and it was therefore impossible to get through a distress signal of any kind.

"Immediately after the ship was torpedoed every effort was made to get rafts and boats launched. Also the circular life belts from the bridge and several splinter mats from the outside of the bridge were cut adrift and afterwards proved very useful in holding men up until they could be got to the rafts. Weighted confidential publications were thrown over the side. There was no time to destroy other confidential matter, but it went down with the ship.

"The ship sank about 4:29 P.M. (about eight minutes after being torpedoed). As I saw her settling rapidly, I ran along the deck and ordered everybody I saw to jump overboard. At this time most of those not killed by the explosion were clear of the ship and were on rafts or wreckage. Some, however, were swimming and appeared to be about a ship's length astern of the ship, at some distance from the rafts, probably having jumped overboard very soon after the ship was sunk.

"Before the ship sank two shots were fired from a No. 4 gun with the hope of attracting attention of some nearby ship. As the ship began sinking I jumped overboard. The ship sank stern first, and twisted slowly through nearly 180 degrees as she swung upright. Before the ship reached the vertical position the depth charges exploded, and I believe them to have caused the death of a number of men. They also partially paralyzed, dazed or stunned a number of others, including Lieutenant Kalk and myself and

several men, some of whom are still disabled but recovering.

"Immediate efforts were made to get all the survivors on the raft and then get rafts and boats together. Three rafts were launched before the ship sank, and one floated off when she sank. The motor dory, hull undamaged but engine out of commission, also floated off, and the punt and wherry also floated clear. The punt was wrecked beyond usefulness and the wherry was damaged and leaking badly, but was of considerable use in getting men to the rafts. The whaleboat was launched but capsized soon afterwards, having been damaged by the explosion of the depth charges. The motor sailer did not float clear, but went down with the ship.

"About 15 or 20 minutes after the ship sank the submarine appeared on the surface about two or three miles to the westward of the rafts, and gradually approached until about 800 to 1,000 yards from the ship, where it stopped and was seen to pick up one unidentified man from the water. The submarine then submerged and was not seen again.

"I was picked up by the motor dory and at once began to make arrangements to try to reach the Scillys in that boat in order to get assistance to those on the rafts. All the survivors then in sight were collected and I gave orders to Lieutenant Richards to keep them together.

"Lieutenant Scott, the navigating officer, had fixed the ship's position a few minutes before the explosion and both he and I knew accurately the course to be steered. I kept Lieutenant Scott to assist me and four men who were in good condition in the boat to man the oars, the engine being out of commission. With the exception of some emergency rations and half a bucket of water, all pro-

visions, including medical kits, were taken from the dory and left on the rafts. There was no apparatus of any kind which could be used for night signaling."

Oddly enough the rafts, which were left helpless, were picked up by patrol vessels before the dory which went off in search of aid had itself found succor. All who had taken refuge on boats or rafts were in the end rescued, save Lieutenant Kalk, who, though in a greatly weakened condition, swam from one raft to another to equalize the loads and died of exhaustion. "He was game to the last," was the epitaph his men formulated for him, and the Navy Department commemorated his heroism by giving his name to a new destroyer.

The loss of the *Jacob Jones* was the most serious disaster suffered by the navy during the war. Sixty-four men and two officers were lost with the ship. The record of the struggle for life after the ship had disappeared is full of stories of heroism and self-sacrifice. But such records were limited only by the opportunities offered for their making. The brief endurance of the enemy after the United States came in left little time for the men of our fighting ships to show the stuff that was in them. In fact, only three vessels of that class were lost—the *Jacob Jones*, the *Alcedo*, a converted yacht, and the cruiser *San Diego*, which was sunk off Fire Island on the New York coast, presumably by striking a floating mine. Six lives were lost in the last disaster which was at first thought to be

due to torpedo attack. A careful search of the waters adjacent, however, made shortly after, discovered a number of floating mines which must have been laid by a wandering submarine which thereafter returned to her base. It was doubtless from such a mine that the *San Diego* received her death wound.

CHAPTER V

The ferry to France.—Germany amazed.—The first transport fleet.—The base at St. Nazaire.—Loss of the *Antilles*.—The converted yacht *Alcedo*.—The *Tuscania* and the *President Lincoln*.—The *Covington* and *Mt. Vernon*.—Disappearance of the *Cyclops*.

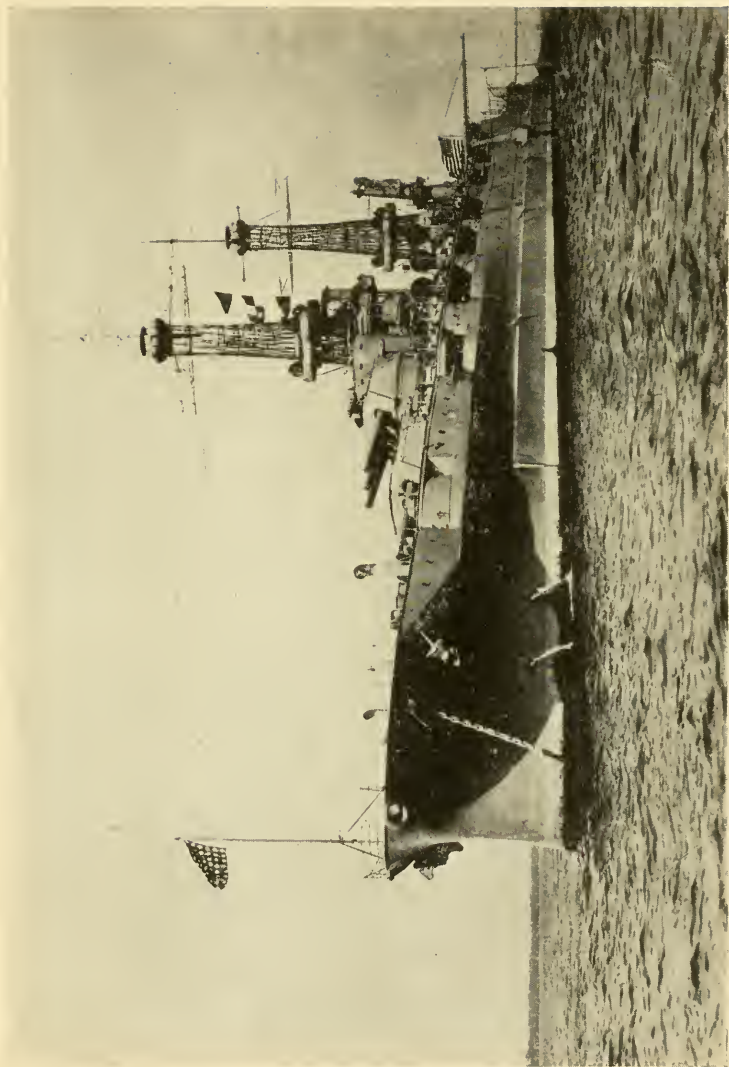
SHORTLY after the armistice the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, in beginning an address on the work of the navy, said:

“When the war broke out we lacked ships to carry our men and supplies across the water. Britain came to our aid and transported to France American soldiers and supplies for them, and the seas were kept open. Never in the history of the world were so many men, together with their complete equipment, carried across 3,000 miles of water with as few losses. Though we sent to France 2,000,000 in one and a half years not a single man lost his life on an American troopship, and only a few went to their death as the result of submarine attacks on other transports.

“The Germans, too, were somewhat surprised at our job of crossing. A few weeks before the armistice was signed some German prisoners were brought to a French camp, and Allied officers went to question them. Among them was a young German who had spent the early part of his life in the United States, and he expressed surprise at seeing so many Americans already in France. He said to the Allied officers: ‘When I was in Germany on my last furlough they told me that there were only a handful of

Americans in France, but it looks to me as though the whole face of the earth was covered with Yankees.' This young German wore the Iron Cross—which today can be bought in Germany at about a cent a bushel. He was much interested in the Victoria crosses, and the Croix de Guerre worn by the officers about him. He remarked to the officers: 'I can understand the French crosses and the British cross, but what puzzles me is, How did the Yankees get across?' "

Although Secretary Daniels very properly gave credit to the British for supplying ships to aid in carrying our more than 2,000,000 soldiers across seas it is fair to note that of these 950,000 were carried in American bottoms. This may well be looked upon as the greatest transportation job in history. And in its performance not a single American troopship was lost on her way to foreign ports. Ships were lost it is true, but they were either British ships carrying American troops, as in the case of the *Tuscania*, or American ships returning after discharging their troops, as in that of the *Antilles*. During the period of greatest activity, July and August, 1918, 3,444,012 tons of shipping were escorted to and from French ports by United States vessels. Of this vast volume of traffic, passing through the most dangerous part of the submarine zone, only 0.009 per cent of the incoming, and 0.013 per cent of the outgoing, vessels were lost through enemy action. During the same months 259,604 American soldiers were landed in France without the loss of one man by enemy attack.



The U.S.S. Pennsylvania

The first considerable military expedition to France set sail from New York, June 14, 1917. Every possible endeavor had been made to make the departure of the ships a deep secret, and a dense fog which overhung the bay on the day of sailing was hailed by the officers in command as an aid to this purpose. Nevertheless the efficiency of the German secret service was such that it was learned later that the sailing of the fleet was known to the German Admiralty almost before it was fairly out of American waters. The flotilla was divided into four groups, sailing six hours apart and constituted as follows:

GROUP I

Transport	Escort	Type
<i>Saratoga</i>	<i>Seattle</i>	Armored Cruiser
<i>Havana</i>	<i>De Kalb</i>	Auxiliary Cruiser
<i>Tenadores</i>	<i>Corsair</i>	Converted Yacht
<i>Pastores</i>	<i>Wilkes</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Terry</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Roe</i>	Destroyer

GROUP II

Transport	Escort	Type
<i>Momus</i>	<i>Birmingham</i>	Scout Cruiser
<i>Antilles</i>	<i>Aphrodite</i>	Converted Yacht
<i>Lenape</i>	<i>Fanning</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Burrows</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Lamson</i>	Destroyer

GROUP III

Transport	Escort	Type
<i>Mallory</i>	<i>Charleston</i>	Cruiser
<i>Finland</i>	<i>Cyclops</i>	Converted Yacht
<i>San Jacinto</i>	<i>Allen</i>	Destroyer
	<i>McCall</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Preston</i>	Destroyer

GROUP IV

Transport	Escort	Type
<i>Montanan</i>	<i>St. Louis</i>	Cruiser
<i>Dakotan</i>	<i>Hancock</i>	Cruiser Transport
<i>El Occidente</i>	<i>Shaw</i>	Destroyer
<i>D. N. Luckenbach</i>	<i>Ammen</i>	Destroyer
	<i>Flusser</i>	Destroyer

The fleet of fourteen transports was thus under escort of twenty-one vessels of war, all under command of Rear-Admiral Albert Gleaves in the flagship *Seattle*. Most of the transports were converted American coastwise liners, the interiors of which had been ripped out, and tiers of bunks installed for the accommodation of the "doughboys," whom they were to carry to the field of battle. Some had been famous pleasure ships, carrying people of wealth and leisure into the balmy tropic airs of the Caribbean in the winter season. A very different errand was assigned them now, as in their war gray or glaringly camouflaged exteriors, with every sign of luxury sternly erased from their hulls and cabins they put out, loaded heavy with young American manhood, to brave the terrors of a submarine-infested sea.

The fleet did not sail in majesty, amid a spectacular farewell from crowded docks, with flags waving and salutes booming. That sort of pageantry of war was abandoned in this colossal conflict. Instead the ships sneaked off to sea, through the fog, as if fairly ashamed of their errand. Not all put off from New York moorings, for some of the troops had been assembled at other

ports, and the transports bearing them met the New York units out at sea at a spot known only to their commanders. It was throughout the war one of the disappointments which befell "dough-boy" and "gob," one of the chief sorrows that had to be borne by the loving ones who gave them up, that there could be no glorious departures, no leave-takings, or escorting trips down the bay. The vigilance of the submarines compelled the utmost secrecy.

All the way over rigid discipline was maintained on every ship, and precautionary drills in all that should be done in the event of attack or disaster were held. It was well known that submarines were operating in the area to be crossed, and target practice, drill in the method of "abandoning ship," and boat drills were held. The water-tight doors were kept closed, and after the submarine zone was reached, the ships ran with all lights out.

June 22nd the fleet was subjected to a torpedo attack. Concerning this a controversy arose within the Navy Department, and, in the press almost as savage at the attack itself, and much noisier than the subject warranted. That a torpedo was thought to have been seen by lookouts on both the *de Kalb* and the *Havana* seems certain, and also that the lookouts on the flagship, *Seattle*, saw the wake of a submarine. The gunners on both the former ships cut loose, and fired at the objects sighted but without apparent effect. It is fair to remember that this was the first trip into hostile

waters of the sailors on either of these ships, and that the gambols of a porpoise are sometimes exceedingly suggestive of the approach of a torpedo. Four days later the second group of ships sighted a submarine about one hundred miles off the coast of France and the destroyer, *Cummings*, gave chase and dropped bombs over the spot where she had been seen. Now it is entirely probable that these were actually lurking U-boats, for the enemy was aware of the approach of the United States fleet and would naturally plan to attack it. But, unfortunately, when the reports reached the Navy Department at Washington a not unnatural desire to give the utmost dramatic effect to the story of the first menace to our boys on their way to France, led to the writing and publication of an elaborate dispatch purporting to give the stories of eye-witnesses to a fierce battle between the fleet and the submarines. For a time the story held the attention of newspaper readers all over the United States. Then authoritative denials of its accuracy began to come in, and finally it was even asserted that the entire story had been made out of whole cloth. The final report of Admiral Gleaves, made public months after, authenticated the report of the submarine attack, but rather discredited the dramatic story of the battle.

Before beginning the transportation of our forces to France it was necessary to select a port and naval base for their reception. Havre, Calais and Boulogne were crowded with British shipping,

Brest was the principal French naval base. It was therefore determined to take a little used port, with a large harbor, and to develop it to the proportions that would be needed for the accommodation of the immense flood of American fighters. Accordingly St. Nazaire, a sleepy little fishing town at the mouth of the Loire, was chosen. It was off the lines of transatlantic trade and had seldom seen more than one or two tramp steamers at anchor in its harbor. What then must have been the amazement of its people to wake up one morning and in June find their harbor filled with great gray troopships and cruisers, while out beyond the bar could be seen more still, and farther out the smoke of yet more on their way to the new American base.

For the vanguard of the American army in France had arrived at midnight on June 26th. A young American college boy, serving in the naval volunteers, and that night acting as orderly on the bridge of the *De Kalb*, first ship to make port, told the writer of his experience on that first sight of France.

"It was black as well could be when we steamed into the harbor guided by the lights and cast anchor. At that time I could not make out any shore line, but as the gray dawn gradually spread over the horizon I could see a long line of hills on either side. Then the tall white tower of the light could be made out, and the light itself went out as the day broke. Gradually I could see ahead of us a little town of white cement or stone houses, with

red tiled roofs, seemingly built along a single street following the line of the shore. The hills rose back of it, and here and there the red roof of a château peeped through the green foliage. The sea, with the rising of the sun, grew beautifully blue and I could see that a sort of boulevard ran along the front of the town close to the water. Something was moving on it. Thrilled by my first sight of France, and thinking that I was about to see some of the apparatus of the war we had come to join, I begged the officer's glasses and focussed them on the moving object. It was nothing but a common old Ford flivver!"

That Ford, however disappointing to the young "gob," fresh from Detroit, where they made them by the hundreds of thousands, was the symbol of the American conquest of St. Nazaire. For our army and navy engineers seized on that quiet French fishing village and made it something which the old inhabitants could not recognize. Enormous concrete breakwaters and docks were built. Warehouses to accommodate food and clothing for a city of half a million people were established. Railroads were built into the interior, and railroad sidings covered square miles of what had been smiling farm land. Millions upon tens of millions of dollars were spent in the construction work, while the money spent by our soldiers, who began coming in by the tens of thousands, soon made the French shopkeepers and peasants think that they had come upon an El Dorado.

News of the arrival of "Les Americaines" spread rapidly through the little town—where indeed they had been expected for some days despite the endeavors of the censorship—and the wharves and waterfront streets were quickly filled with excited and enthusiastic French people. Where American flags had been found in the hamlet seemed inexplicable, but they appeared by the scores and the people who had no flags waved red, white and blue streamers. Early as was the hour the waterfront was crowded, and cries of, "Vive les États-Unis" and "Vive la France," rose on every side. Steam whistles were blowing from the craft in the harbor, and the bands on the men-of-war blew themselves hoarse with the Marseillaise and the Star-Spangled Banner, in alternation. There were formal delegations from the French army and navy to greet the new allies, and the Mayor in all the glory of evening dress and a tri-colored sash was present with an address of welcome which few of the doughboys could understand. But the true greeting, and the one that all could comprehend came from the people of the little town who streamed down the narrow streets and crowded the waterfront as the boats from the ships began landing their cargoes of men clad in khaki and blue.

Then began a great era for St. Nazaire. It was far from the front where the guns were pounding, and men dying, and although, like all other French towns, it had given almost all its able-bodied men to the army it knew the horrors of war only by re-

port. There came now to its people a chance to reap the profits of war. The thousands of sailors, and the tens of thousands of soldiers suddenly landed in its streets wanted dainties to eat, wines and beer to drink, postcards and souvenirs of every sort. The town speedily became a sort of magnified street fair with every imaginable useless article exposed for sale in the little shops that up to that time had offered only the simple necessities demanded in a fishing village. After the first enthusiastic greeting to the Americans as the saviors of France from the Boche were over the inhabitants of St. Nazaire settled down to the more serious business of extracting every obtainable coin from the pockets of "gobs" and "doughboys" alike. It was no difficult job. The men of the sea and the tented field are always loose with their money, and the novelty of French food and drink appealed to them, while the stocks of French souvenirs, hurriedly increased by orders from Paris, could hardly be kept up sufficiently to meet the demand.

But the financial profit so abundantly reaped by the inhabitants was as nothing to the enormous advantages the town gained from the American operation. To begin with it was cleaned up. The picturesqueness of a French village is apt to blind the purely artistic observer to its dirt. The Americans put in sewerage and paved the streets, preached public cleanliness and enforced it, for the town was policed by American soldiers and marines. The sale of spirituous liquors to members of the Ameri-

can armed forces was strictly prohibited, although they were permitted to take the wines and beer of the neighborhood, and found great delight in the open-air cafés which are a feature of French life. The French girls and the Yankee blue jackets soon became great companions, and an international language that would make a professor of either French or English wince soon was developed and met all the needs of friendly intercourse. They were great days for St. Nazaire and those who witnessed them often wonder how the little town appears now that it has returned to its original population with nothing to recall the flush times of the war except the empty warehouses, the idle docks and the deserted railroad sidings.

For eighteen months, however, it was all life and bustle, and for all that time the great gray, or camouflaged, transports of the American army shadowed and shepherded by the cruisers and destroyers of the navy pressed on through wave and gale and spindrift, watchful of the lurking submarines but almost miraculously preserved, to land their human cargoes at the point where the railroads to where the guns were roaring came down to the sea. In all, 911,047 men were carried by United States navy transports, and 41,544 by other ships under the Stars and Stripes. The British ships carried 1,006,987, and ships leased to and operated by the British 68,246. Other ships, Italian, French, etc., carried 52,066. Of this magnificent total not one American troopship was lost

on her way to France, though three, the *Antilles*, *President Lincoln* and the *Mount Vernon*, were destroyed on their way home. Many American lives were unhappily lost by the sinking of the *Tuscania*, *Moldavia* and *Otranto*, all British vessels. The *Leviathan*, the converted and renamed German liner, *Vaterland*, ferried across nearly one hundred thousand men, in ten round trips. So great was her speed—which she increased by a knot an hour after overhauling by American mechanics—that she sailed without escort and was never attacked by a U-boat. Was it sentiment that led the Germans thus to spare the most magnificent product of their own ship-yards?

The first loss of an American transport came on October 17, 1917, when the *Antilles* was sunk by a torpedo about three hundred miles west of Quiberon Bay. Prior to her service as a transport the vessel had been one of a line of passenger ships plying between New York and New Orleans. At the time of the disaster she was returning to the United States from France with 237 persons aboard, including her crew. She sunk in four minutes from the time the torpedo struck, and 67 lives were lost—which gives a fair indication of the frightful loss of life which would have resulted had she been struck while in service and with nearly four thousand men aboard. She carried a crew of navy gunners, the senior officer of which, Commander Daniel T. Ghent, in his official report

gave the following account of the sinking of the vessel:

“Just after daylight a torpedo was sighted heading for us about two points abaft the port beam on a course of 45° with the keel. The torpedo was seen by the second officer on the bridge, the quartermaster and signalman on watch; by the first officer and first assistant engineer from the port side of the promenade deck, and by one of the gun crews on watch aft. They estimated the distance from 400 feet to as many yards. Immediately on sighting the torpedo the helm was put ‘hard over’ in an attempt to dodge it, but before the ship began to swing the torpedo struck us near the after engine-room bulkhead on the port side. The explosion was terrific; the ship shivered from stem to stern, listing immediately to port. One of the lookouts in the main top, though protected by a canvas screen about 5 feet high, was thrown clear of this screen and killed on striking the hatch. This case is cited as indicating the power of the ‘whip’ caused by the explosion. Guns were manned instantly in the hope of getting a shot at the enemy, but no submarine was seen.

“The explosion wrecked everything in the engine room, including the ice machine and dynamo, and almost instantly flooded the engine room, fireroom, and No. 3 hold, which is just abaft the engine-room bulkhead. The engine room was filled with ammonia fumes and with the high-pressure gases from the torpedo and it is believed that every one on duty in the engine room was either instantly killed or disabled except one oiler. This man happened to be on the upper gratings at the time. He tried to escape through the engine-room door, which is near the level of the upper gratings, but found the door jammed, and the knob on his side

blown off. Unable to force the door, and finding he was being overcome by the gases and ammonia fumes, he managed to escape through the engine-room skylight just as the ship was going under. Within a few seconds after the explosion the water was over the crossheads of the main engines, which were still turning over slowly. Of the 21 men on duty in the engine room and firerooms only 3 managed to escape. Besides the oiler 2 firemen managed to escape through a fireroom ventilator. The fact that the engines could not be maneuvered and the headway of the ship checked added to the difficulty of abandoning ship.

"Just as the torpedo struck us I was on the way to the pilot house from the scene of fire. Before I could reach the bridge the officer of the deck had sounded the submarine alarm, and I immediately sounded the signal for 'Abandon ship.' The officer on watch, quartermaster, and signalman went to their boats. Radio Electrician Watson, being relieved by Radio Electrician Ausburne in the radio room, reported on the bridge for instructions. I sent an order to get out an S. O. S. signal. Radio Electrician Watson, who was lost, remained with me on the bridge until the gun crews forward were ordered to save themselves. He was wearing a life jacket and was on his way to his boat when I last saw him.

"Before leaving port all boats had been rigged out except the two after boats, which, owing to their low davits, could not with safety be rigged out except in favorable weather. All other boats had been lowered to the level of the promenade deck. All hands had been carefully instructed and carefully drilled in the details of abandoning ship. The best seamen in the ship's crew had been detailed and stationed by the falls; men had been stationed by the gripes of each boat, and all boats had been equipped

with sea painters; two axes had been placed in each boat, one forward and one aft for the purpose of cutting the falls or sea painters in case they should get jammed and men had been detailed to cast them off. That only 4 boats out of 10 succeeded in getting clear of the ship was due to several causes—the short time the ship remained afloat after being torpedoed; the headway left on the ship, due to the fact that the engine-room personnel was put out of action by the explosion; the rough sea at the time; the fact that the ship listed heavily; and that one boat was destroyed by the explosion.

“When there was no one left in sight on the decks I went aft on the saloon deck, where several men were struggling in the water in the vicinity of No. 5 boat and making no attempt to swim away from the side of the ship. I thought perhaps these men could be induced to get clear of the ship, as it was feared the suction would carry them down. By the time that point was reached, however, the ship, being at an angle with the horizontal of about 45 degrees, started to upend and go down listing heavily to port. This motion threw me across the deck where I was washed overboard. The ship went down vertically. The suction effect was hardly noticeable.

“The behavior of the naval personnel throughout was equal to the best tradition of the service. The two forward gun crews in charge of Lieutenant Tisdale remained at their gun stations while the ship went down and made no move to leave their stations until ordered to save themselves. Radio Electrician Ausburne went down with the ship while at his station in the radio room. When the ship was struck Ausburne and McMahon were asleep in adjacent bunks opposite the radio room. Ausburne realizing the seriousness of the situation, told McMahon to get his life pre-

server on saying as he left the room to take his station at the radio key 'Good-by, Mac!' McMahon later, finding the radio room locked and seeing the ship was sinking, tried to get Ausburne out but failed.

"As soon as the *Henderson* saw what was wrong she turned to starboard, and made a thick smoke screen which completely hid her from view. The *Willehad* turned to port and made off at best speed. The *Corsair* and *Alcedo* returned to the scene of the accident and circled about for about two hours, when the *Alcedo* began the work of rescue of the survivors, the *Corsair* continuing to look for the submarine. The total number of persons aboard the *Antilles* was 234, the *Corsair* rescuing 50 and the *Alcedo* 117. Too much credit cannot be given to the officers and men of the *Corsair* and *Alcedo* for their rescue work and for the whole-heartedness and generosity in succoring the needs of the survivors. The work of the medical officers attached to the above vessels was worthy of highest praise.

"An instance comes back which indicates the coolness of the gun crews. One member was rescued from the top of an ammunition box which by some means had floated clear and in an upright position. When this young man saw the *Corsair* standing down to him he semaphored not to come too close, as the box on which he was sitting contained live ammunition."

The converted yacht *Alcedo* which figured in this disaster did not long survive it. While escorting a convoy, off Quiberon, only a few weeks later, she, too, went down before the sinister stroke of an enemy torpedo. Commander W. T. Conn, Jr., wrote a graphic report of the sinking, from which I quote in part:

"At or about 1:45 A.M. November 5, while sleeping in emergency cabin immediately under the upper bridge, I was awakened by a commotion and immediately received a report from some man unknown, 'Submarine, Captain!' I jumped out of bed and went to the upper bridge, and the officer of the deck, Lieutenant Paul, stated he had sounded 'general quarters,' had seen a submarine on the surface about 300 yards on the port bow, and submarine had fired a torpedo which was approaching. I took station on port wing of upper bridge, and saw torpedo approaching about 200 yards distant. Lieutenant Paul had put rudder full right before I arrived on the bridge hoping to avoid the torpedo. The ship answered slowly to her helm, however, and before any other action could be taken the torpedo I saw struck the ship's side immediately under the port forward chains, the detonation occurring instantly. I was thrown down and for a few seconds dazed by falling débris and water.

"Upon regaining my feet I sounded the submarine alarm on the siren to call all hands if they had not heard the general alarm gong, and to direct the attention of the convoy and other escorting vessels. Called to the forward gun crews to see if at stations, but by this time realized that the top gallant forecastle was practically awash. The foremast had fallen, carrying away radio aerial. I called out to abandon ship.

"I then left the upper bridge and went into the chart house to obtain ship's position from the chart, but, as there was no light, could not see. I went out of the chart house and met the navigator, Lieutenant Leonard, and asked him if he had sent any radio, and he replied 'No.' I directed him and accompanied him to the main deck and told him

to take charge of cutting away forward dories and life rafts.

"I then proceeded along starboard gangway and found a man lying face down in gangway. I stooped and rolled him over and spoke to him, but received no reply and was unable to learn his identity, owing to the darkness. It is my opinion that this man was dead.

"I continued to the after end of the ship, took station on after-gun platform. I realized that the ship was filling rapidly and her bulwarks amidships were level with the water. I directed the after dories and life rafts to be cut away and thrown overboard and ordered the men in the immediate vicinity to jump over the side, intending to follow them.

"Before I could jump, however, the ship listed heavily to port, plunging by the head, and sank, carrying me down with the suction. I experienced no difficulty, however, in getting clear, and when I came to the surface I swam a few yards to a life raft, to which were clinging three men. We climbed on board this raft and upon looking around observed Doyle, chief boatswain's mate, and one other man in the whaleboat. We paddled to the whaleboat and embarked from the life raft.

"The whaleboat was about half full of water, and we immediately started bailing and then to rescue men from wreckage, and quickly filled the whaleboat to more than its maximum capacity, so that no others could be taken aboard. We then picked up two overturned dories which were nested together, separated them and righted them, only to find that their sterns had been broken. We then located another nest of dories, which were separated and righted and found to be seaworthy. Transferred some men from the whaleboat into these dories and proceeded to pick up other men

from wreckage. During this time cries were heard from two men in the water some distance away who were holding on to wreckage and calling for assistance. It is believed that these men were Ernest M. Harrison, mess attendant, and John Winne, Jr., seaman. As soon as the dories were available we proceeded to where they were last seen, but could find no trace of them.

“About this time, which was probably an hour after the ship sank, a German submarine approached the scene of torpedoing and lay to near some of the dories and life rafts. She was in the light condition, and from my observation of her I am of the opinion that she was of the *U-27-31* type. This has been confirmed by having a number of men and officers check the silhouette book. The submarine was probably 100 yards distant from my whaleboat, and I heard no remarks from any one on the submarine, although I observed three persons standing on top of conning tower. After laying on surface about half an hour the submarine steered off and submerged.

One officer and twenty men were lost with the *Alcedo*. Commander Conn, in talking later of the high discipline and bravery of the crew eighty per cent of whom by the way were Reserves, told this story:

“I had a boy with me, a yeoman, one of the Naval Reserves. One day I told him that if we were ever torpedoed it would be his duty to save the muster roll, so that when all the survivors had reported we could check up and find out who had been lost. Sure enough, the torpedo came, and in the very dead of night. The ship floated just four minutes. Hours after I encountered my young yeoman in a

boat while we were waiting to be picked up. He was soaked through, for he had gone overboard when the ship sunk and clung to a broken buoy, holding up with one hand a hospital steward who was too weak to hold on longer. When I saw him I said, 'My man, where is my muster roll?' 'Here it is,' he replied, putting his hand inside his dripping blouse and pulling it out. Through all the struggle with death he had never forgotten it."

The most serious loss which the United States suffered at sea was one for which our navy was in no sense responsible. This loss was incurred in the sinking of the British ship, *Tuscania*, which was serving as a transport and was sent to the bottom by a German torpedo off the north coast of Ireland. The ship had on board at the time of the disaster 2,179 soldiers, mainly National Guardsmen from Michigan and Wisconsin. She was under convoy of British destroyers, and was in what was generally believed to be a zone of safety when the blow of the unseen enemy was struck. No sign of the assailant was seen, although in the gathering dusk the wake of a torpedo that missed was sighted, before a second one struck right amidships.

The ship did not sink with the rapidity that marked the end of some stricken craft. Had she gone down on an even keel there would have been time to save most of those who were not injured in the explosion. Unfortunately she heeled over to starboard at such an angle as to make it impossible to launch the lifeboats on the port side. This sit-

uation arose so frequently in disasters during the war that innumerable devices were patented for expediting the lowering of boats from the side of a ship that was badly careened, but none was ever made serviceable. In the loss of the *Tuscania*, the ship heeled so far to starboard that her deck assumed an angle on which none could stand upright. Men clambered down using every rope, cleat or other projection to give them a foothold until they reached the rail which was soon only a few feet above water. The steepness of the declivity threw many into the sea. Boats that were launched from the other side stuck on the hull of the ship, or fell into the water so unevenly that many were thrown out and drowned. It soon seemed as though the great mass of the troops would have to depend on individual efforts for safety, and many began putting on life preservers and jumping into the sea.

At this moment the long low shape of a British destroyer was seen through the dark, slipping slowly alongside the sinking ship. With consummate skill her commander so steered her that she lay close enough to the side of the ship for men to jump from it to the deck of the rescuer. As fast as one destroyer had thus obtained a load another took her place, and in this way a great number of the men were saved. Meantime trawlers were coming up on every side, and began picking up those who had jumped into the sea, and were buoyed up by their life-belts. Many were saved in

this way, but despite all efforts the toll of life was heavy, numbering 204 among the American soldiers alone.

Survivors declare that unexpected as was the attack—the troops were at their dinner when the torpedo struck—there was no sign of panic. Many of the soldiers were lumber-jacks from Michigan and Wisconsin enlisted in the forestry battalions of the army. They were used to an active life and the presence of danger, and despite their brief period of drill and discipline responded promptly to the word of command and manifested the cool response to discipline characteristic of the veteran.

On the last day of May, 1918, the transport, *President Lincoln*, which in her earlier and less glorious days had been a German liner under the same name was about seven hundred miles off the French coast returning to the United States with 715 persons aboard. She was struck by three torpedoes and sunk in about twenty minutes. The vessel was a passenger liner of modern type, with a high superstructure amidships, and her great length made it impossible to give oral orders from the bridge which would be understandable in all parts of the ship. All the conditions made for panic and great loss of life, but the discipline of the men was so admirable that the ship was abandoned with the loss of but three officers and twenty-three men. Commander Percy W. Foote wrote a report of the disaster that gives a very graphic picture of the scene:

"At about 9 A.M. a terrific explosion occurred on the port side of the ship about 120 feet from the bow and immediately afterwards another explosion occurred on the port side about 120 feet from the stern of the ship, these explosions being immediately identified as coming from torpedoes fired by a German submarine.

"It was found that the ship was struck by three torpedoes, which had been fired as one salvo from the submarine, two of the torpedoes striking practically together near the bow of the ship and the third striking near the stern. The wakes of the torpedoes had been sighted by the officers and lookouts on watch, but the torpedoes were so close to the ship as to make it impossible to avoid them; and it was also found that the submarine at the time of firing was only about 800 yards from the *President Lincoln*.

"Of the 23 men who were lost seven were engaged in work below decks in the forward end of the ship, and they were either killed by the force of the explosion of the two torpedoes which struck in that vicinity, or were drowned by the inrush of the water. The remaining 16 men were apparently caught on the raft alongside the ship and went down, this being probably caused by the current of water which was rushing into the big hole in the ship's side, as the men were on rafts which were in this vicinity.

"There are many instances where a man showed more interest in the safety of another than he did for himself. When loading the boats from the rafts one man would hold back and insist that another be allowed to enter the boat. There was a striking case of this kind when about dark I noticed that Chief Master-at-Arms Rogers, who was rather an old man, and had been in the navy for years, was on a raft, and I sent a boat to take him from the raft, but he objected considerably to this, stating that he was quite all

right, although as a matter of fact he was very cold and cramped from his long hours on the raft.

“Fortunately this splendid type of life raft known as the Balsa raft, as it was made of balsa wood, had been furnished the ship, and these resulted in saving a great many men who might otherwise have been lost, due to exhaustion in the water.

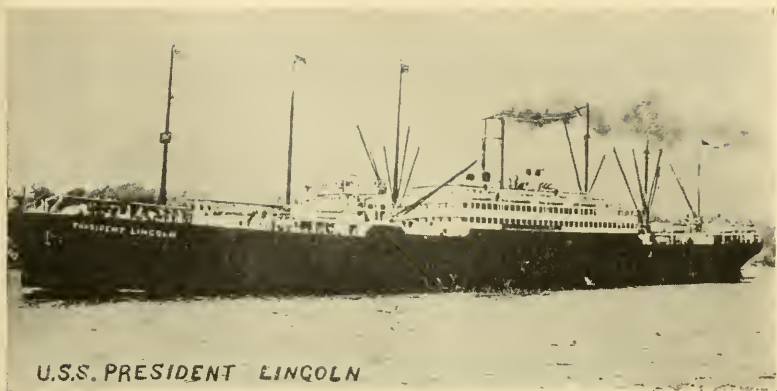
“The conduct of the men during this time of grave danger was thrilling and inspiring, as a large percentage of them were young boys, who had only been in the navy for a period of a few months. This is another example of the innate courage and bravery of the young manhood of America.

“There were at the time 715 persons on board, including about 30 officers and men of the army. Some of these were sick and two soldiers were totally paralyzed.

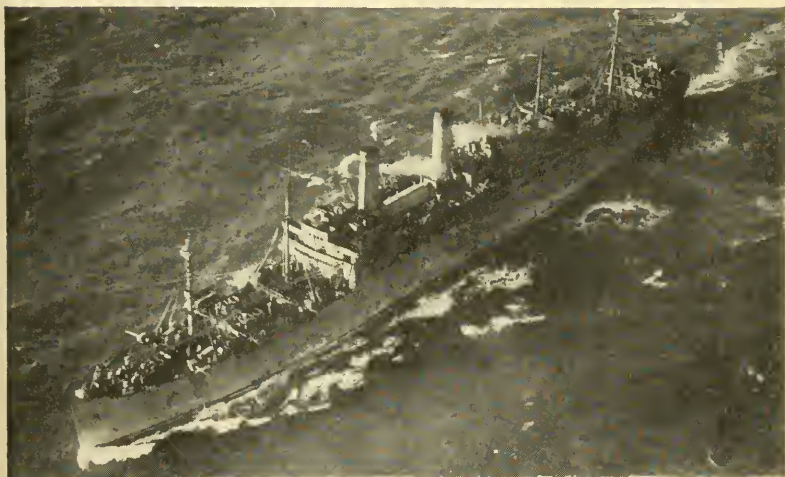
“The alarm was immediately sounded and every one went to his proper station which had been designated at previous drills. There was not the slightest confusion and the crew and passengers waited for and acted on orders from the commanding officer with a coolness which was truly inspiring.

“Inspections were made below decks and it was found that the ship was rapidly filling with water, both forward and aft, and that there was little likelihood that she would remain afloat. The boats were lowered and the life rafts were placed in the water and about 15 minutes after the ship was struck all hands except the guns’ crews were ordered to abandon the ship.

“It had been previously planned that in order to avoid the losses which have occurred in such instances by filling the boats at the davits before lowering them, that only one officer and five men would get into the boats before lowering



U.S.S. PRESIDENT LINCOLN



Two Famous Ships: The *President Lincoln*, and President Wilson's Ship, the *George Washington*, from an Airplane

and that every one else would get into the water and get on the life rafts and then be picked up by the boats, this being entirely feasible, as every one was provided with an efficient life-saving jacket. One exception was made to this plan, however, in that one boat was filled with the sick before being lowered and it was in this boat that the paralyzed soldiers were saved without difficulty.

“The guns’ crews were held at their stations hoping for an opportunity to fire on the submarine should it appear before the ship sank, and orders were given to the guns’ crews to begin firing, hoping that this might prevent further attack. All the ship’s company except the guns’ crews and necessary officers were at that time in the boats and on the rafts near the ship, and when the guns’ crews began firing the people in the boats set up a cheer to show that they were not downhearted. The guns’ crews only left their guns when ordered by the commanding officer just before the ship sank. The guns in the bow kept up firing until after the water was entirely over the main deck of the after half of the ship.

“The state of discipline which existed and the coolness of the men is well illustrated by what occurred when the boats were being lowered and were about halfway from their davits to the water. At this particular time, there appeared some possibility of the ship not sinking immediately, and the commanding officer gave the order to stop lowering the boats. This order could not be understood, however, owing to the noise caused by escaping steam from the safety valves of the boilers which had been lifted to prevent explosion, but by motion of the hand from the commanding officer the crews stopped lowering the boats and held them in mid air for a few minutes until at a further motion of the hand the boats were dropped into the water.

“Immediately after the ship sank the boats pulled among the rafts and were loaded with men to their full capacity and the work of collecting the rafts and tying them together to prevent drifting apart and being lost was begun.

“While this work was under way and about half an hour after the ship sank, a large German submarine emerged and came among the boats and rafts, searching for the commanding officer and some of the senior officers whom they desired to take prisoners. The submarine commander was able to identify only one officer, Lieutenant E. V. M. Isaacs, whom he took on board and carried away. The submarine remained in the vicinity of the boats for about two hours and returned again in the afternoon, hoping apparently for an opportunity of attacking some of the other ships which had been in company with the *President Lincoln*, but which had, in accordance with standard instructions, steamed as rapidly as possible from the scene of attack.

“By dark the boats and rafts had been collected and secured together, there being about 500 men in the boats and about 200 on the rafts. Lighted lanterns were hoisted in the boats and flare-up lights and Coston signal lights were burned every few minutes, the necessary detail of men being made to carry out this work during the night.”

It is worth noting as illustrative of the conditions of warfare forced by the submarine tactics that, although at the moment the *President Lincoln* was torpedoed she was in company of two other United States transports, her people were forced to rely for rescue upon destroyers summoned by wireless from a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles. The ships that were by her side scattered and fled, in accordance with standing orders,

as soon as the explosion was heard. Commander Foote paid a tribute to the skill of the destroyer navigators who, despite the fact that the boats had drifted more than fifteen miles from the position reported by wireless, and no further wireless signals were possible, discovered them promptly in the dead of night.

One of the most extraordinary experiences of the whole war was that of Lieutenant Isaacs, who was picked up a captive by the submarine. Twice on the way back to the German port the "sub" was detected by American destroyers that dropped depth bombs in her wake. Though badly shaken up the ship was able to proceed, and when she was running on the surface in Danish waters Isaacs thought to escape by jumping overboard and seeking safety on the neutral shore. But he was caught and thereafter kept below. Landing at Wilhelms-haven he was sent by train to Karlsruhe. On the way he attempted to escape by jumping from the train window. The rest of his experience he may tell himself:

"I jumped to the opposite railroad track and was so severely wounded by the fall that I could not get away from my guard. They followed me, firing continuously. When they recaptured me they struck me on the head and body with their guns until one broke his rifle. It snapped in two at the small of the stock as he struck me with the butt on the back of the head.

"I was given two weeks' solitary confinement for this attempt to escape, but continued trying, for I was deter-

mined to get my information back to the navy. Finally, on the night of October 6th, assisted by several American army officers, I was able to effect an escape by short-circuiting all lighting circuits in the prison camp and cutting through barbed-wire fences surrounding the camp. This had to be done in the face of a heavy rifle fire from the guards. But it was difficult for them to see in the darkness, so I escaped unscathed.

"In company with an American officer in the French army, I made my way for seven days and nights over mountains to the Rhine, which to the south of Baden forms the boundary between Germany and Switzerland. After a four-hour crawl on hands and knees I was able to elude the sentries along the Rhine. Plunging in, I made for the Swiss shore. After being carried several miles down the stream, being frequently submerged by the rapid current, I finally reached the opposite shore and gave myself up to the Swiss gendarmes, who turned me over to the American legation at Berne. From there I made my way to Paris and then London and finally Washington, where I arrived four weeks after my escape from Germany."

Two anecdotes drawn from the disaster are worth telling as illustrating the spirit of the men. When the submarine appeared upon the surface there was natural apprehension lest she should fire upon the boats, as had been often the practice of the German commanders at such times. From the boats it looked as if a petty officer on the "sub" was engaged in taking the covering off the muzzle of the gun as if in preparation for firing. Whereupon one of the jackies remarked, "Good night. Here comes the fireworks." And later the chaplain

in one of the boats, having said prayers, very properly but with rather a dispiriting effect on the men, a petty officer sought to dispel the resultant gloom by starting up the tune, "Where do we go from here?" which was sung with gusto by all hands.

Another transport that had safely landed her consignment of fighting men for France and was on the way home, when sent down by the enemy's torpedo, was the *Covington*, formerly the German liner *Cincinnati*. Just why the Navy Department insisted on changing this name is not known. Neither is it clear why, with the proper aversion to German names, the army maintained a transport called *Zeppelin* throughout the war. The *Covington* had sailed from Brest with a fleet of several other large transports when she was struck fairly abeam the engine-room by a torpedo. It was a sorry end to good service, for the ship had made six trips to France and had carried thither 27,000 fighting men for the overthrow of the Teutons.

On the night of July 1, 1918, the foe had his revenge; for the watchful lookouts had hardly reported sighting a streak of white on the water about three hundred yards to port when with a terrific roar a torpedo struck the side of the ship and exploded, throwing up a column of water higher than the smokestacks. The wound was directly abeam the engine-room and that compartment and the fireroom quickly filled with water. The bugles sang out the call, "Abandon ship," the

men rushed to the boats, and the lights all over the vessel turned red and went out as the machinery died in face of the intrushing water. In the blackness of the night twenty-one of the twenty-seven lifeboats were lowered, despite a heavy list to port, and the lack of any power from the steam winches. The destroyer, *Smith*, which was happily at hand, took the men from the boats as fast as they could be carried across. In the meantime a salvage party remained on the ship, which for a time it seemed likely might be saved, gathering up records, sextants and chronometers and other portable articles of value. Two British tugs and an American steamer came out from Brest and an effort was made to tow the shattered ship to port. But her hurt was fatal. About noon of the day following the explosion it became evident that she was going down, and the hawsers of the towing vessels were cast loose. Her sinking was an extraordinary spectacle. "It was an awe-inspiring sight," wrote her captain, "as the ship rose rapidly to a vertical position in the water, the after smoke-pipe being clear when the ship was in a vertical position. This gave a spectacle of about 450 feet of this magnificent 1,700 ton liner, standing as a shaft on the surface of the sea. The ship remained in this position for a period of perhaps ten to fifteen seconds, then sank rapidly in the vertical position, the bow disappearing at 2.32 P.M. It was providential that all men had been removed from the ship before she rose vertically from the water. Had there been

any aboard they would undoubtedly have been lost."

As it was, happily, no lives at all were lost.

The last of our troopships to meet with serious disaster was the *Mount Vernon*, which was torpedoed when two hundred and fifty miles off the coast of France on her return voyage. She was, however, saved through the seamanlike skill of her officers and men, and brought all crippled into a French port. But in the explosion which sorely shattered her the lives of thirty-six of her people were lost.

In the days of her Teutonic infancy the *Mount Vernon* had been the *Kronprinzessin Cecelie*, and with a tonnage of 18,600 became one of our largest transports. The periscope of the submarine that dealt the fatal blow was discovered and one of the ship's guns was in action when the missile struck. The report of the commanding officer, Captain D. E. Dismukes, gives a vivid picture of the scene which, with some condensation, may well be printed here:

"The explosion was so terrific that for an instant it seemed that the ship was lifted clear out of the water and torn to pieces. Men at the after guns and depth charge stations were thrown to the deck, and one of the 5-inch guns thrown partly out of its mount. Men below in the vicinity of the explosion were stunned into temporary unconsciousness.

"It was soon ascertained that the torpedo had struck the ship fairly amidships, destroying four of the eight

boiler rooms and flooding the middle portion of the ship from side to side for a length of 150 feet. The ship instantly settled 10 feet increase in draft, but stopped there. This indicated that the water-tight bulkheads were holding, and we could still afford to go down $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet more before she would lose her floating buoyancy.

"The immediate problem was to escape a second torpedo. To do this two things were necessary, to attack the enemy, and to make more speed than he could make submerged. The depth charge crews jumped to their stations and immediately started dropping depth bombs. A barrage of depth charges was dropped, exploding at regular intervals far below the surface of the water. This work was beautifully done. The explosions must have shaken the enemy up, at any rate he never came to the surface again to get a look at us.

"The other factor in the problem was to make as much speed as possible, not only in order to escape an immediate attack, but also to prevent the submarine from tracking us and attacking after nightfall.

"C. L. O'Connor, water tender was in one of the flooded firerooms. He was thrown to the floor and instantly enveloped in flames from the burning gases from the furnaces, but instead of rushing to escape he turned and endeavored to shut a water-tight door leading into a large bunker abaft the fireroom, but the hydraulic lever that operated the door had been injured by the shock and failed to function. Three men at work in this bunker were drowned.

"If O'Connor had succeeded in shutting the door, the lives of these men would have been saved, as well as considerable buoyancy saved to the ship. The fact that he, though profoundly stunned by the shock and almost fatally burned by the furnace gases, should have had presence of

mind and the courage to endeavor to shut the door is as great an example of heroic devotion to duty as it is possible for one to imagine. Immediately after attempting to close the door O'Connor was caught in the swirl of inrushing water and thrust up a ventilator leading to the upper deck. He was pulled up through the ventilator by a rope lowered to him from the upper deck.

"The torpedo exploded on a bulkhead separating two fire-rooms, the explosive effect being apparently about equal in both firerooms, yet in one fireroom not a man was saved, while in the other fireroom two of the men escaped. The explosion blasted through the outer and inner skin of the ship and through an intervening coal bunker and bulkhead, hurling overboard 750 tons of coal. The two men saved were working the fires within 30 feet of the explosion and just below the level where the torpedo struck.

"It is difficult to see how it was possible for these men to have escaped the shower of débris, coal and water that must instantly have followed the explosion. However, the two men were not only saved but seem to have retained full possession of their faculties. Both of them were knocked down and blown across the fireroom. Their sensations were first a shower of flying coal, followed by an overwhelming inrush of water that swirled them round and round and finally thrust them up against the gratings above the top of the firerooms. Both of them fortunately struck exit openings in the gratings and escaped.

"One of the men, P. Fitzgerald, after landing on the lower grating and while groping his way through the darkness trying to find the ladder leading above, stumbled over the body of a man lying on the grating. He at first thought the man dead but on second impulse he turned and aroused him and led him to safety. The man had been stunned into

semi-unconsciousness and would undoubtedly have been lost if Fitzgerald had not aroused him. As a matter of fact, the water rose at once 10 feet above this grating as the ship settled to the increased draft.

“Another interesting instance of presence of mind and the effect of training may be cited. The attack occurred when all the men not on watch were at breakfast. One of the mess rooms is on the lowest deck aft, and it happens that there is only one exit to the compartment. Naturally, when the shock of the explosion came the men at the tables made a rush for the exit hatch. One of the men, Thomas F. Buckley by name, at first thrown to the deck by the force of the explosion, jumped upon one of the steps, turned and yelled, ‘Remember, boys, we are all Americans and it’s only one hit.’ The doctrine had been constantly preached to the men that one hit would not sink the ship if every man would do his full duty. This warning from Buckley was electrifying. All men immediately calmed themselves and went, not to their boats to abandon ship, but to their collision stations to save her.”

But amidst all the excitement on the ship the need for protection against the enemy was not for a moment lost sight of. There was danger that the submarine might find opportunity to let fly another torpedo, and to avert this depth bombs were dropped, and the batteries manned to give the foe a hot reception should he show his head above water. In one minute and ten seconds after the explosion an effective barrage of depth bombs was thus laid down, and within two hours the engine-room wreckage had been patched up and the ship was on her way back to Brest. She had, beside the

rest of her company, 150 wounded soldiers on their way home who could never have been saved but for the perfect discipline that saved the ship.

One of the two mysteries of the war in its relation to the United States navy, was the sinking of the armed coast guard steamer, *Tampa*, in the English Channel, September 26, 1918, with a loss of 118 men. The *Tampa* was on patrol in company with other vessels, most of them of the British navy. Suddenly the ships nearest her, at a distance of several miles, heard a thunderous roar and the little revenue cutter was seen to vanish in smoke and flame. By the time rescuers could reach the scene there was nothing left but floating wreckage. Not a man survived to tell the story of the disaster. With this occurrence in point of mystery ranks the utter and complete disappearance of the gigantic collier *Cyclops*, a steel ship of 19,000 tons, carrying 20 officers, 213 men and 57 passengers.

This ship, one of the newest and most seaworthy vessels of the navy, put in at Barbadoes, West Indies, on March 13, 1918, for coal. She was carrying a full cargo of manganese, and despite the fact that one of her engines was out of order was expected to reach New York by the 13th. But after she passed out of the harbor of Barbadoes not a sign of her has ever been seen. No vessel in those frequented trade routes sighted her afloat, or saw any wreckage that might suggest her loss. Despite the size of her crew and passenger list no boat was

ever seen on the waters in her path. No tropical hurricane or other convulsion of nature was reported in those seas to explain her disappearance, and when the war ended diligent inquiries in Germany failed to elicit any information as to her having been sunk by a submarine. The case bids fair to remain one of the insoluble mysteries of the sea, made the more mysterious by the fact that the Navy Department was quick to comb the seas in the path of her intended course with the immense number of destroyers, sub-chasers and cruisers at its disposal. Probably no ship was ever so thoroughly sought. None was more completely obliterated. That so large a vessel could disappear without leaving a shred of wreckage, or a boatload of survivors would be incredible if it were not the fact.

With all our naval losses, however, there was none that would compare with the sinking of a troopship carrying four to six thousand soldiers—and we had many such at sea. Yet not only was none sunk but the Germans made no serious attacks upon any. Several reasonable explanations are given for their apparent failure to at least attempt so terrible a stroke.

It is urged that when we entered upon the war the German government was convinced that its chance for victory was gone, and that a draw was the best outcome of the war for which they might hope. In such event with the certainty of the presence of the United States at the peace table, prudent German statesmen thought it best to refrain

from awakening too bitter resentment among the American people. The sinking of a troopship with the loss of five thousand American lives would have little bearing on the progress or outcome of the war. For four years battles in which the sacrifice of life was greater than that had been of almost weekly occurrence. But such a sacrifice of American lives at a stroke would infuriate the American people, and breed a hatred more lasting than would grow out of any fairly fought battle, however heavy the loss. So cool heads at Berlin advised leaving our troopships alone.

Such was one explanation. Another was that the troopships came to France by one route; the food-ships to England by another. Germany had not enough submarines to block both lanes. The starvation of England was the all-important task. If that could be accomplished it was immaterial how many American soldiers were landed in France. Accordingly, Germany concentrated on the food-ships—and lost.

And there was a third explanation, simpler and more satisfying—namely, that the American navy so guarded its troopships, with sub-chasers, destroyers and cruisers that no U-boat could break through the phalanx to deliver its fatal stroke. Probably that was in fact the real reason why not one soldier was lost on an American transport on the way to France.

CHAPTER VI

Our battle fleet.—Efforts to keep it at home.—Admiral Rodman's command.—Watching for the enemy.—The battleships at sea.—Destroyers in a storm.—The North Sea mine barrage.—Sweeping up the mines.—Naval guns ashore.—Our far-flung squadrons.

IT was the "small fry" of the navy—the destroyers, submarine-chasers and the light cruisers—that were in the public eye during the World War. The dreadnoughts and battleships vanished from the sight of the ordinary citizen when the war began and he had but the vaguest idea of where they might be until its end. That they could not be engaged upon any very spectacular service he could guess from the fact that while he heard little of them he heard less of any considerable fleet battles in which they might be engaged side by side with the ships of our allies. At the opening of the war there was a cry for the retention of our fleet on our own coasts. Newspapers—usually of a type which had manifested a certain sympathy for Germany—rang the changes upon alarmist forebodings of a German raid on our coastwise cities, and demanded that the fleet be kept close at home to avert any such peril. The same newspapers and their political following insisted that we should keep our army at home, not "compel our

brave boys to shed their blood on foreign fields," and that our part in the war should be confined to standing on our coasts and defying the Germans to attack us here.

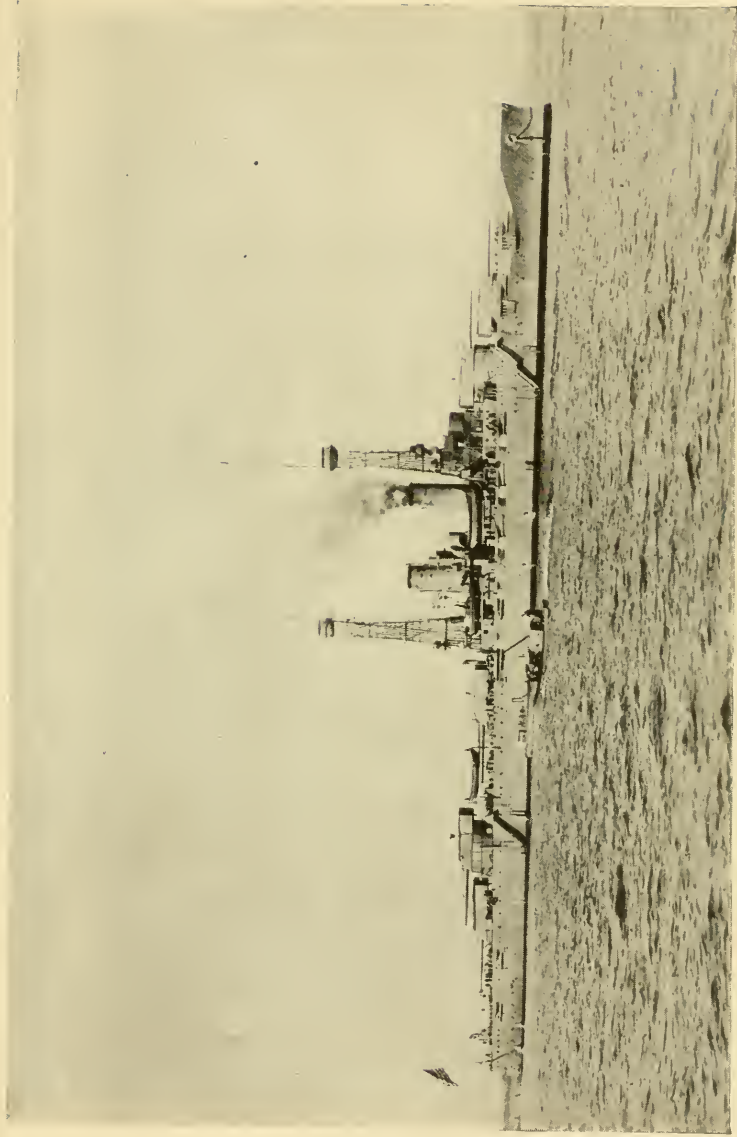
Had that policy prevailed the war would have been greatly prolonged and our ships and troops might, indeed, have been needed for home defense at a time when the Germans, having disposed of all their other enemies, could have given their undivided attention to us. Happily for the honor of our country and fortunately for civilization that policy of perfidy and cowardice did not prevail. The United States went into the war with every pound of power it possessed and her armed forces, military and naval, were sent swiftly to the front at the points where the fighting promised to be hardest and the results most decisive. Our destroyers, as has been told, went first and fairly astonished our allies with the promptitude with which they took up their war activities. Our army, to the number of more than two million was ferried to France in time to give the foe his death stroke. And our battle fleet, despite the clamor of those who would have doomed it to ignoble inactivity on our own coasts, was promptly by the side of our British brothers in arms on the cold, gray reaches of the North Sea.

While Americans were wondering what had become of their battleships, and while the wise ones were saying that they were cruising in South American waters, a fleet of dreadnoughts had in

fact been dispatched to Europe under command of Admiral Hugh Rodman. In the fleet were our most powerful ships: the *New York*, Captain C. F. Hughes, afterward Captain E. L. Beach; the *Wyoming*, Captain H. A. Wiley, afterward Captain H. H. Christy; the *Florida*, Captain Thomas Washington, afterward Captain M. M. Taylor; the *Delaware*, Captain A. H. Scales; the *Arkansas*, Captain W. H. G. Bullard, afterward Captain R. L. de Steiguer, and the *Texas*, Captain Victor Blue.

This was a fleet of tremendous power—its ships all modern and their crews drilled to the highest efficiency. Alone it could have given the Germans a hard brush for victory, but its addition to the British fleet gave the Allies so overwhelming a superiority afloat in the North Sea that it became morally certain that the Germans would not come out to offer battle. But for the long months that our ships spent in those icy northern waters each day's routine was conducted as though a daring enemy of menacing strength might at any moment show his wisps of smoke on the horizon.

Somewhat to the rage of the British-haters in our country the first American battle squadron was sent to become a division of the British Grand Fleet and placed under the command of its admiral, Sir David Beatty. This was quite in accordance with the generous and hearty methods of cooperation among the Allies which put all the British armies in Europe under the command of a Frenchman, Marshall Foch. Admiral Rodman



Admiral Rodman's Flagship, the *New York*, with the English Fleet. This Ship was Present at the Surrender of the German Fleet

says of the results of this co-operation, in his report:

“Now as to our operations with the Grand Fleet. When we joined we were at once, thanks to our home training, able to co-ordinate and co-operate with the British fleet. In order to work homogeneously we adopted their signals and methods of communication, their plans, policies, maneuvers and tactics; we took our share of the work, patrol, search, protecting the convoys, mining and other activities. Sometimes we were commanded by British admirals, sometimes they served under my command; there was never the slightest friction, misunderstanding, or petty jealousy. In fact our mutual association in this war's work has drawn us so close together that in the Grand Fleet it was instrumental in ripening friendship with brotherhood.”

A second squadron was sent over later for the especial purpose of being at hand to guard our troopships in the event a single enemy armed ship should manage to slip out to sea. This squadron, in order to be nearer the route of the troopships, was kept at Berehaven, Ireland. It was composed of three of our most powerful dreadnoughts: the *Nevada*, Captain A. T. Long, afterward Captain W. C. Cole; the *Oklahoma*, Captain M. L. Bristol, afterward Captain C. B. McVay, and the *Utah*, Captain F. B. Bassett. The squadron was under the general command of Rear-Admiral Thomas S. Rodgers. Its duty was a rather dismal one. Berehaven, in Bantry Bay, on the extreme southwestern coast of Ireland, is but a melancholy little hamlet.

In it was no entertainment for officers or men. If there had been they could hardly have taken advantage of it for the incessant vigilance imposed upon them made shore leave infrequent. There was no overnight leave. Shore liberty was restricted to four hours, and those enjoying it were not permitted to go out of communication with their ships. As for active service that was made impossible by the tenacity with which the foe clung to his fortified ports.

Admiral Rodman's squadron had at least the semblance of naval activity. It is true that the enemy did not respond to their repeated challenges, but at least they had the excitement of offering him opportunity to fight. Every possible inducement was offered him. Ships, singly or in small squadrons, would be sent into the waters adjacent to his lurking-place to lure him out. Convoys, apparently but slightly defended, passed within easy striking distance of his base. Of course, behind was the Allied fleet in ample strength to pounce upon him should he come out. And equally, of course, the Boche, being nobody's fool, suspected this and lay where he would be safe.

Occasionally the Germans made a hasty excursion into the water of the North Sea. Their spokesmen described these forays as defiance of the Allied fleets and insisted that the latter were afraid to "take up the dare." But the excursions were but a little way out to sea—however impressive the departure from Kiel or Wilhelmshaven

might have looked to those who saw the fleet depart.

Concerning the part played by the United States ships, and the position held by them in these efforts to come to grips with the enemy, Admiral Rodman had this to say :

“ Within a very short time of our first operations with the Grand Fleet we were assigned to one of the two places of honor and importance in the battle line. We were known and designated as the Sixth Battle Squadron, and, as one of the two fast wings, would take station at the head or rear of the whole battleship force, dependent upon certain conditions unnecessary to mention, when going into action. As a matter of fact, when, on one occasion we came within a few miles of cutting off from its base and engaging the German fleet, the disposition was such that the American battleship division would have been in the van and have led into action, had the enemy not avoided action and taken refuge behind his defenses, as usual, before we could catch him.

“ It was our policy to go after him every time he showed his nose outside of his ports; no matter when or where, whether in single ships, by divisions, or his whole fleet, out we went, day or night, rain or shine (and there was mighty little daylight, and much less shine in the winter months), blow high or blow low, and chase him back in his hole. So persistent was this performance on our part, so sure were we to get after him, that toward the end he rarely ventured more than a few miles from his base.”

The chief danger against which our battleships had to guard was submarine attack. There were

several narrow escapes, in which destruction was averted only by the swift decision and seamanlike action of our officers. Once the *New York* was actually rammed by a submarine—not a torpedo. The snout of the U-boat made a big dent in the battleship's hull near the propeller, and there was every reason to believe that the screw of the larger craft, which was under way at the moment, sunk the submarine of which no sign was detected. Probably the collision was wholly accidental, as, had the commander of the submarine been aware of his proximity to the flagship he could easily have sunk her with a torpedo, even though by so doing he sacrificed himself. After this escape, as the *New York*, with one propeller out of commission, was proceeding to drydock for repairs she was attacked by torpedoes three times but dodged them all.

More wearing upon the men than any active battle service could have been was the long strain of ceaseless watching in that foggy, cold and tempestuous sea. The latitude in which the ships were operating was north of that of Sitka, Alaska, or on about the same parallel as Petrograd. At all times the North Sea is famous for its turbulence and fogs. In winter it was a madly tossing waste of water, beaten by high winds, scourged with driving storms of snow, hail and sleet. Up and down its rolling reaches the ships steamed, all lights out, their decks awash, plunging and rolling in the heavy seas until it seemed that not even the ponderous steel frames of the battleships themselves

could withstand so racking a strain. From sunset to sunrise, that is from fifteen to eighteen hours in winter, not a ray of light was permitted to shine from any ship. Men whose duty called them to the decks had to grope their way in Stygian darkness and risk the sudden rush of a wave across their unstable footing. And all about were other battle-ships, with their attendant satellites of cruisers and destroyers likewise plunging through the blackness. It was amazing that collisions did not work upon the fleet that deadly damage the Germans never attempted to inflict.

In an admirable book, "The Fighting Fleets," Mr. Ralph D. Paine, who had the fortune to be with the fleets and who writes of the sea with a sailor's knowledge, and a landsman's fresh enthusiasm, tells of one of the sallies of the Grand Fleet as he saw it:

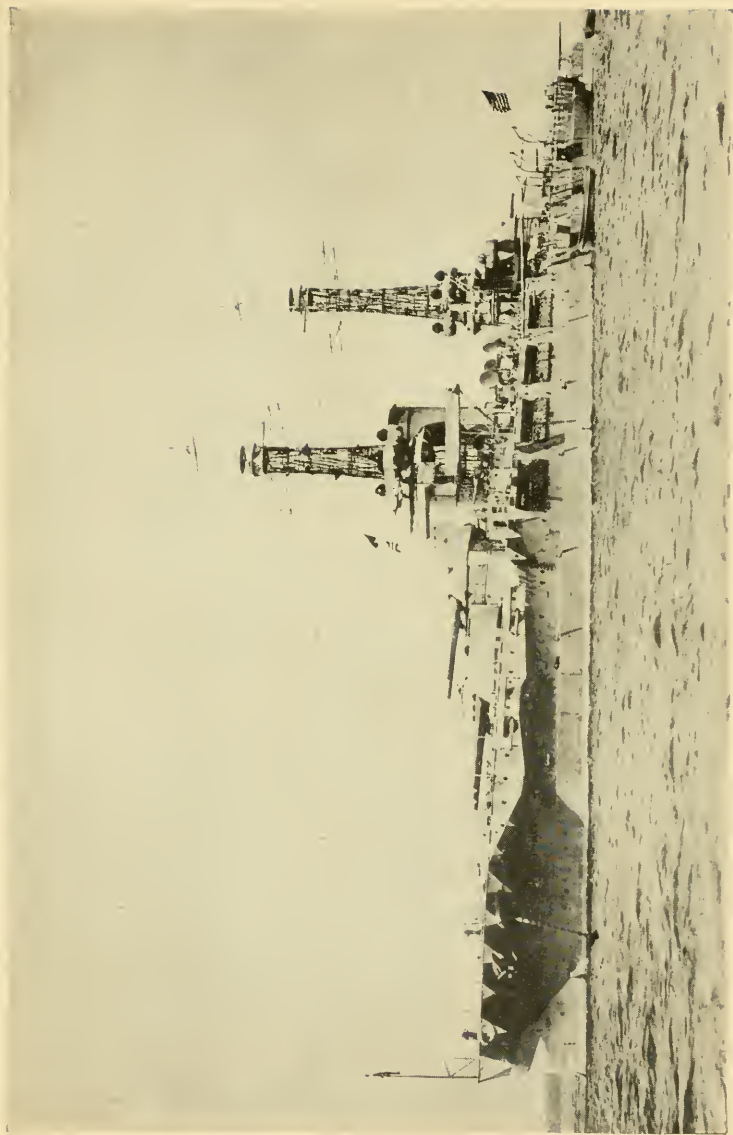
"As the moment of departure drew near the blinker lights flashed from scores of British ships. The darkness sparkled with these final messages. Then the bare hill-sides roundabout re-echoed to the harsh clank of chain cables as the anchors lifted. After that the black night and silence, and great ships stealing out slowly toward the headlands and the fairway to the sea. Most of them were invisible, for the sky was densely overcast and the freshening wind brought gusts of rain. They passed out as though feeling their way with a blind man's sense of perception, so many hundred yards apart, steering close to rock-bound islands whose merest touch would have ripped a ship's hull.

"Now the big ships do not move alone. They are escorted as befits their stately rank and station, and with them go the flocks of destroyers, the submarines, the cruisers and other craft that screen, scout and protect the mighty squadrons. All these, too, were under way at the stroke of the hour as if a master mind had pressed a key that animated them as one. They fled on their appointed courses without confusion, unerringly, separate parts of one enormous mechanism, harmonious and synchronized. To navigate this fleet through the cramped roadstead in broad daylight would have been considered a handsome feat in time of peace.

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"A glimpse of this sea power was dramatically revealed when a dawn, somber and angry, slowly drove the darkness from the melancholy expanse of water. The wind had risen rapidly. It was a shouting gale which tore the shallow depths into foam-streaked combers, huge and violent. The confused fury of the sea was astonishing. This sudden gale which blew with a velocity of seventy miles an hour would have flattened the North Atlantic and then rolled it up in long swinging surges. Here it tumbled the sea this way and that so that a ship was assaulted with unexpected blows and could find no respite.

"Off to port and starboard moved in dim perspective other lines of battleships. Dead ahead was the majestic superdreadnought which a British admiral had chosen for his flagship. The seas were leaping over her. They poured across her decks as a tide swirls over a reef. They reared and broke in white cascades about her turrets from which the great guns grimly showed their hooded snouts. Rolling ponderously she exposed almost half her hull and then plunged into it with bows clean under. Seas that will



The *Nevada*, one of Admiral Rodger's Squadron

toss a thirty thousand ton battleship about in this fashion are indubitably rough.

“Our own ship was making no better weather of it. The motion was not as erratic as that of a destroyer, but this great citadel of a vessel was by no manner of means comfortable to live in. Meals at the table in wardroom or admiral’s cabin were out of the question. Chairs were lashed fast. Men moved with care lest they toboggan across the deck and break a leg. Water swashed in when the gunports rolled under and barelegged blue jackets were baling the floors with buckets. It was damp, gloomy, dismal below with the hatches battened, but the ship had bucked through heavier storms than this, and these hundreds of American sailors were salt water philosophers. It was a heap sight worse in the trenches, said they, and the guy who beefed about staying wet and losing sleep for twenty-four hours or so was a short-card sport.”

If such were the conditions of life on a dreadnought in a winter’s gale what must they have been on a destroyer. These long and needle-like craft had a genius for rolling and plunging. Their draft was light, usually about twelve feet. Their beam was about one-tenth of their length—averaging twenty-six feet. Sharp-bowed, they cut into the seas and took green ones over the bow or the quarter until they seemed like submarines running awash. Along the decks were strung wire hawsers on which were suspended small trolleys with loops to which the sailor seeking to go from one end of the deck to the other clung desperately, often with his feet flung high in air by some great comber rush-

ing along the deck below him. It is reported that a lad on one of these destroyers, whose grip on his trolley was insecure, was swept away into the mad turmoil of raging waters. His comrades flung a life-buoy after him, but there was no possibility of attempting a rescue. They turned away sadly, and the report to the captain that night told of one man lost. Some days afterward, on returning with the rest of the boats of their flotilla to the base, the shipmates of the vanished man were amazed to see him coming aboard in the most matter of fact way to report. It appeared that just as one wave had swept him off the deck of his own ship, another had deposited him gently on that of a destroyer following in the column. Warned by experience he grabbed his trolley this time and hung tight.

"Young man," said his captain solemnly, when he made his report, "you'd better resign from the navy. You have had all the luck that is coming to you in this service."

None of the bone-shaking devices operated for sport at Coney Island, or other American pleasure resorts, could for a moment approach in eccentricity of motion, and jerky assaults upon equilibrium, and the stability of man sitting or standing, one of these destroyers. It was as bad, perhaps worse, below than on deck though the added peril of the rushing waves was indeed wanting there. At night officers had to be strapped in their narrow bunks to keep them from rolling out, and at that the precaution was not always effective. The scientific

fellows say that a destroyer will roll through an arc of sixty degrees in six seconds, and has been known to cover seventy-five degrees. The geometrical phrase conveys little idea of what this means to the man who is trying to keep his balance on a floor pitching at such a rate, and with but little space for staggering. Arms and legs were often broken by men being thrown with violence against bulkheads or furniture. Mere rolling was commonplace. A destroyer taking the sea on her quarter will develop a corkscrew twist that unsettled the stoutest stomach, and sets rolling about the wardroom everything that is not screwed down. Setting table for meals is unthought of. The chairs are strapped down and the men, eating hungrily, often wish they were strapped to the chairs and their food strapped to their fingers.

One of the great pieces of work performed by our fleet in the North Sea was the laying of the mine barrage which was designed still further to curb the activities of the enemy submarines. Though performed in co-operation with the British navy this enterprise was undertaken at the suggestion of an American officer, Rear-Admiral Ralph Earle, and the form of mine was of American origin. In all, 70,100 mines were laid, of which 56,570 were American. The barrage stretched across the North Sea, from the Orkneys to the coast of Norway, a distance of 230 miles. Within this area no ship, either surface or submarine, could navigate without imminent danger of being blown into frag-

ments. The course of the safety lanes which traversed the field of death were known only to the Allies, who put trusted pilots on neutral ships to take them through in safety. But for any enemy vessel it was certain destruction to brave the explosive seas. To what extent it proved a deterrent to U-boats trying to make the Atlantic is not known, as any that may have been destroyed would have perished unseen on a sea that was necessarily deserted. But the British authorities estimated that not less than ten were sunk, while many were kept from their chosen hunting-ground by the peril of reaching it.

Laying the mines was a sufficiently delicate and arduous task. Handling infernal machines stuffed full of high explosives, in a heavy sea with a boat that careers like a bucking broncho was an occupation that might try the stoutest nerves. Always, too, the mine layers were exposed to possible attack from the air by enemy aircraft, or from the sea by submarines. To guard against this they were accompanied by destroyers and battle cruisers from the Grand Fleet. But even more perilous, and lacking the stimulant of war-time conditions was the job of removing the mines after peace was declared. Each nation swept up its own mines, and as the United States navy had laid the greater part of them, its task in the general cleaning up was the more arduous.

An officer in the Naval Reserve, Lieutenant Dudley A. Nichols, told in the *New York Times* of the

work of the mine-sweepers in a way that makes clear the ingenuity of the apparatus employed, and the inevitable hazard of the service:

“To the layman the term mine sweeping will convey only a vague idea of the procedure followed out. It is a cutting rather than a sweeping process, for each mine is held in its proper position and at a certain level by a steel mooring rope which is fastened to an anchor resting on the bottom, and this mooring rope must be cut in order to bring the mine to the surface.

“An elementary form of sweep might consist merely of a heavy steel cable having each of its ends made fast to a tug, so that with the two tugs steaming abreast of each other this cable would catch the mooring ropes of any mines within the area between them. Then the mines would be dragged along and in all probability the mooring ropes would finally part, allowing the buoyant mines to float to the surface.

“To sweep a considerable area, however, the sweeping tugs must proceed with all possible speed, and as soon as this is done the horizontal water pressure against the cable lifts it to the surface, with the result that the mines are passed over. To overcome this the kite principle was adopted, but the kite was made to dive instead of fly. The water pressure on a mine sweeping kite causes it to dive just as the wind pressure on an ordinary box kite lifts it up high into the air.

“A huge steel kite weighing 1,800 pounds is towed by each sweeper to attain the level of the deepest mines in the North Sea barrage, which were laid at the maximum depth to which a modern submarine dare submerge.

“Just as lengthening the string to an ordinary kite will

cause it to rise, lengthening the cable by which the water kite is towed causes it to dive deeper; and it is by this simple means that the mine sweepers are enabled to cut off mines at any desired depth. These vessels always work in pairs, the sweep for each pair comprising a kite towed by a wire rope from each ship and a steel cable stretched between the two kites. The wire rope is called the kite wire, while the steel cable takes the name of sweep wire.

“As the minefield is neared the divisions segregate. On a division flagship a queer looking, checkered flag flutters up the signal halyard and the single line formation gives way to a formation in pairs or teams. Life-belts are donned. It is time to pass the sweep. In each pair one ship slows down slightly while her mate comes alongside until they are running abreast and about fifty feet apart. A hand-line is heaved across the gap between them, the end of the sweep wire hauled over and shackled to its other half, and as they diverge the wire is rapidly paid out. The kites are launched with a great splash and the sweepers wheel into the lines of mines, maintaining a constant separation of four or five hundred yards.

“It is at this moment that pandemonium begins. Mines explode in the sweep, ahead, astern, on the beam, and everywhere except directly underneath. At least one fervently hopes not underneath! The sea has suddenly become a Pandora’s box teeming with evil spirits of noise and demolition.

“It is inconceivable that any ships can endure such tremendous shocks without sustaining serious damage. So severe is the shock from a deep level mine a hundred yards distant that it is as if a prodigious blow has been suddenly struck on the ship’s keel by a colossal hammer.

“A half mile astern of each pair of sweepers comes a

little sub-chaser whose duty it is to sink all mines which are cut off and float to the surface. To accomplish this half a dozen men are kept busy firing service rifles.

"Thousands of fish are stunned or killed by the explosions and the sub-chasers find time to pick up a deck load of these of a size, variety, and excellence to tempt an epicure. At night they generously distribute this cargo of fresh food among the sweepers; and as a result the sub-chasers have come to be dubbed the "fish boats." The sea-gulls quickly discovered this unlimited source of delicate food and became fast friends and followers of the mine sweepers."

In its Marine Corps, famed for its historic record of daring and efficiency, the navy has always possessed a sort of amphibious force equally ready for fighting afloat or ashore. Of the services of that dashing band of "leather-necks" in the World War, full account will be given in another chapter. But in this war, more than ever before, the blue jackets themselves saw land service, and they contributed mightily to the success of the armies of our allies.

Their great service of this character was in connection with the mounting and employment of great naval guns at various points on the Allied battle line during the last months of the war. Serving ship's guns ashore is no novelty in war, but when the guns happen to be of the fourteen-inch variety the task is one necessitating the greatest engineering skill, and the results are something for an enemy to worry about.

It cannot be said that the idea of using the great guns of the navy ashore originated with either our naval authorities, or those of our allies. It is only natural that it should have suggested itself first to the Germans, as they had a large number of ships with high-calibered guns blockaded in port and useless. As they did not dare to send the ships out to sea they stripped them of their guns which were mounted and used in the bombardments of Dunkirk, Nancy and Châlons-sur-Marne. This German adventure offered a suggestion which the United States was not long to seize. If the Huns could send their guns ashore because they were not going to use their ships on the seas, it was obvious that ours would not be needed at sea and might likewise be used ashore. The German gun that was bombarding Dunkirk was particularly harassing to the British and it was with the idea of demolishing that weapon that the project of putting ground mounts to several heavy cannon of the United States navy was undertaken.

It was no trifling project. A fourteen-inch gun on a ship is mounted on an immovable base of heavy steel, fortified in every way against the shock and rack of the recoil. They were movable, only as the ship to the deck of which they were bolted was mobile. To be of service ashore they had to be given a mount that would permit their carriage from place to place as the shifting scenes of the war demanded. That meant that they must be mounted on railroad cars. Such was, therefore, the

task set for the American engineers. Cars must be designed to support the huge guns, and to sustain the racking shock of their explosion. Together with these must be cars for the ammunition, the guns' crews, and in fact a whole train for each of the monster cannon. The plans were worked out in the Bureau of Ordnance of the Navy, and the contract for the construction let to the Baldwin Locomotive Works. While the work of construction was under way shells began falling in Paris. It was known that at that time the German lines were at least seventy miles away, and the world was for a time incredulous that the Boches could have invented and built a gun with that unheard-of range. But the shells kept on falling. However incredible the gun might appear the shells were there, and very convincing in the damage they did. One fell in a church crowded with worshipers and killed scores of women and children on their knees before their God. Careful study of the methods of this bombardment, and of those of the gun firing upon Dunkirk showed that the two guns were not movable but were fixed upon solid foundations. The bombardment of Paris, conducted implacably and with fatal effect day after day, was having a bad effect upon the morale of the people in the French capital, and General Pershing himself sent appeals that the work on the American guns, which it was believed might silence that foe, should be expedited in every way.

The contracts were let February 13, 1918, and in

two months the first gun was finished and was being proved at Sandy Hook. By July all five guns were at St. Nazaire, and the guns' crews, selected from more than twenty thousand volunteers who had come forward from the navy, had been organized and drilled. But our difficulties were not at an end. It was one thing to build a colossal gun and construct a railway car to sustain its enormous weight. But it was quite another matter to find railroad road-beds and bridges that would stand the strain of its passage. The people of Paris were eager enough to have the guns sent up to the front whence they could demolish the German monster that was dropping two hundred-pound shells inside the circle of the boulevards, and indeed right in the quarter of Paris around the Place Vendôme, which every tourist knows. But the railroad authorities were dubious. They at first declined the request for the use of their roads on which to transport the guns to the front, and for a time it looked as though our great rifles would be doomed to rest, untried, at St. Nazaire. But at this juncture the Germans redoubled their fire upon Paris. The agony of the great city would not be denied. All protests on the part of the railroad managers were overruled, and the first great gun was started off on its progress toward the point to the northeast of Paris, whence it was to begin repaying the Germans in their own coin. Its progress was funereal in pace, but like a triumphant march in the popular ovations which attended it. Our own people shared the doubts of

the French engineers as to the stability and sufficiency of their bridges and road-beds, and the train crawled cautiously along at a snail's pace, with the crews wondering at every moment if the track would crumble or the bridges collapse beneath the crushing weight. Along the way the populace turned out with cheers and music, and the girls of the little villages twined the long and sinister barrel of the great rifle with flowers.

Joyous as this may have been to the Americans who were thus fêted it spoiled their greater sport, for the triumphal progress was watched from the air by German aviators who reported to headquarters the oncoming of the American giants. As a result before the guns reached their station the bombardment of Paris ceased, and investigation showed that the enemy had moved its great gun, leaving only the emplacements in position. The gun carriage was found after the armistice, but what ever became of the gun itself was always a mystery. While this conclusion was entirely satisfactory to the Parisians who were thus saved from the hourly anticipation of a murderous bombardment it was a decided disappointment to the American blue jackets who had hoped to try conclusions with the Boche's biggest gun.

This merely moral victory was not, however, the full measure of the service of the big naval guns in the Allied cause. They were used at various points for cutting German railway connections by destroying bridges, and tearing up the right-of-way.

At Laon and north of Verdun they rendered inestimable service in blocking the road necessary to the German supply trains, and the only one by which, in the event of disaster, the enemy could escape. From the time they were brought into action until the time of the armistice they fired 782 shells at distances ranging from eighteen to twenty-three miles. In acknowledging the aid of the navy General Pershing says of these guns:

“Our large caliber guns had advanced and were skilfully brought into position to fire upon the important lines at Montmedy, Longuyon and Conflans, the strategical goal which was our highest hope was gained. We had cut the enemy’s main line of communication, and nothing but surrender or an armistice could save his army from complete disaster.”

Though there was but little sea-fighting during the war the activities of our capital ships were widespread, and “far-flung” to use Kipling’s phrase. They operated in the Mediterranean for the discomfiture of the Austrian and German submarines that swarmed there. The icy waters off the Murman Peninsula, where is located Russia’s most northern port, held certain of our ships for a time, while their marines were landed to protect a strategic railroad. Our submarine chasers and other nondescript craft served long off Corfu, and at the entrance to the Adriatic, and for a time at Malta. The Pacific squadron, under command of Admiral William Caperton, cruised about the

coasts of South America, showing the flag in such ports as Montevideo, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. The Asiatic squadron, under Admiral Austin M. Knight patrolled Asiatic waters and took part in such Allied activities as occurred there. The Atlantic squadron, under Admiral Henry T. Mayo, guarded our eastern coasts. It had no actual call to actual battle service but, as was proper in view of the extreme importance of the section it guarded, was kept on a high state of efficiency, and besides its patrol duty served as a school in seamanship and gunnery for thousands of officers and sailors who were drawn from it for the rougher work of European waters.

But in whatever station, and however imminent the danger to which they were exposed, or monotonous the duty to which they were assigned, the men of the United States were at all times ready, fit and on tiptoe for response to the call of duty whatever it might be. When the war was ended there followed a storm of criticism bred of antagonisms that had long been apparent between the Secretary of the Navy and certain prominent officers of the line. But out of all the controversy that followed not one word was said reflecting on the quality, gallantry and efficiency of either officers or blue jackets in the great World War.

CHAPTER VII

The mystery ships.—Shrewdness of the Huns.—The “panic squad.”—Exploits of Captain Gordon Campbell.—The “Dunraven Affair.”—The one United States mystery ship.—Submarine vs. submarine.—Advantage of underwater boats.—The navy that flies.—Poor record of airplane construction.—Training aviators.—Potter’s battle with seven planes.—Adrift in the Channel.—Hunting subs with planes.—Demobilizing the aerial navy.—The transatlantic flight.

A WEAPON for use against the submarine which our British allies developed to the very highest stage of efficiency, but which we had little opportunity to employ, was the so-called “mystery ship” or “Q-ship.” This in its ordinary form was a merchantman, a “tramp,” or a trawler which bore concealed in some way under its superstructure a gun which could send any submarine to the bottom. Manned by navy crews vessels of this sort had been operating for nearly three years under the British flag before the general public knew that any such device was being employed for the discomfiture of the Hun. It was a form of naval service in which the very least glory was obtainable, for its essence was complete secrecy. Even when the commander of a “mystery ship” was given the Victoria Cross the Admiralty carefully refrained from making public the nature of the service that had won it. Aboard ship all the comforts of naval service were done

away with, and all of its ceremony as well. There were no uniforms for officers while the roughest of "sea slops" picked up at second-hand shops along the waterfront disguised the quality of the men. Beards, banned in the navy, were encouraged in the mystery service. Sailors, pipe in mouth, would lounge up beside an officer looking over the rail, and salutes were carefully forgotten. The ships themselves were ill-kept and slovenly, destitute of that trig and ship-shape air that characterizes the navy. Even in port the disguise was kept up and officers and men slouched about in a fashion that would scandalize a true navy man ignorant of the circumstances.

The ships were disguised in various ways. Some carried a five-inch gun amidships under the main hatch. At a touch on a lever the hatch would fly open and the gun automatically come to the level of the deck, while the bulwarks would fall away leaving an open port. Other ships instead of having the gun below would carry it on deck covered by a false deckhouse that fell to pieces at the word of command. Sometimes a boat, bottom-up on the deckhouse—common enough in the merchant service—concealed a gun. But these earlier and simpler devices were detected in time by the subs, whose commanders would not come to the surface until they had steamed all round a suspected merchantman, examining her carefully for any signs of false work or tell-tale seams. As that was before the day of depth bombs the "sub" was perfectly safe

as long as she was submerged, however near she might be to her intended victim.

It was the study of the submarine commanders never to waste a torpedo. These missiles were costly—about \$12,000 each—the supply was limited, and when those on a submarine were exhausted she had to return to her home port to stock up again. The authorities at home exacted a specific report for every torpedo gone, which was one of the reasons why the “subs,” having sunk a ship by torpedo, always tried to take one prisoner away with them to testify to the sinking. Whenever possible, however, they would save torpedoes by coming to the surface and destroying the victim by gunfire. When this was done, and the prize surrendered before sinking, they would usually send a boat aboard and complete the destruction by setting the prize afire. As the war wore on and Germany became hard up for food and other necessities the U-boat captains were eager to board their prizes and strip them of food, liquor and other supplies not readily obtainable at home. In this lay the opportunity of the “Q-boats,” whose people would lie *perdu* behind bulwarks and deckhouses until the submarine was at their mercy, then rise to smash her with a shot or two.

In time the suspicions of the enemy made even this difficult. He would not be sure that the ship that had surrendered was in fact a peaceful merchantman until he had shelled her pretty thoroughly and felt assured that there was no crew

lurking at an unseen gun for his undoing. This wise caution on the part of the Boche compelled the crews of the mystery ships to become actors of no small tragic skill. As soon as the torpedo or the first shell struck the ship they would begin to deport themselves in a way which the blue jacket in his true character would regard with lofty scorn. They simulated a wild panic, ran hither and yon with cries of fear, pulled down any flag they might be showing and waved sheets or tablecloths in token of surrender. Sometimes, for deceptive purposes the mystery ship mounted a single gun, as in that day most merchantmen were armed and to show no armament might arouse suspicion. But the navy men who handled that gun did it like a crew of duffers, and seldom showed staying power for more than a single shot. So far as the crew of the submarine could see the one desire of their victims was to get off their threatened ship as quickly as possible. The rush for the boats was wild and disorderly, and there were usually a few who had been trained to fall into the water with artfully simulated clumsiness.

But all the time down below, grouped about the real effective gun, was a cool-headed, disciplined crew of British blue jackets waiting and praying for the submarine to get within point-blank range.

As has been said the war ended too suddenly for this strategy to be employed by our navy, though at the time of its conclusion one mystery ship, manned by our fellows, was cruising the sea in search of a

quarry. But as the system had been adopted by our navy one or two illustrations of the way it was worked by our allies will not be out of place.

Even in the dispatch of the boats from the injured ship there was artful dissimulation. It must appear to be a real abandonment of the ship, and the boats must be so disposed as to coax the enemy into short range. The Germans were always eager to get hold of the papers of a sunken ship, in order to prove to the authorities at home that the quarry had actually been destroyed. Accordingly, of the men detailed to make the spectacular escape there was always one who played the part of the captain—the real captain, of course, remaining on board to deliver the final stroke. This false captain would always be ostentatiously the last to leave the sinking ship. With a final glance up and down her decks, of course carefully observed through the watching periscope, he would, with many gestures, give a few final words of command, and very openly toss into the boat awaiting him a large roll of papers—obviously the very documents for which Fritz was hungering. Then the boats would pull away. But even in that was system. The boat holding the “captain” was the one close to which the enemy would rise if he came up at all. Accordingly, it must keep a place near the abandoned ship. The other boats while apparently keeping near their leader must try to hold such positions that they would not be in the line of fire, should the submarine appear, or should she, if she had been

already attacking by shell-fire at a distance, approach near enough to offer a fair target.

Sometimes the submarine would come close to the ship, still submerged, and steam slowly around her, peering closely through her periscope in search of any suspicious signs. Sometimes she would rise at a distance of three miles or so and begin a slow bombardment. At that distance a merchant ship is a fair target, but a submarine, lying low in the water, is almost impossible to hit. That was the moment when cool self-restraint and discipline on board the mystery ship counted. A good shot had been known to hit and demolish a submarine on the surface at that distance, but the chances were against a hit. If a shot were fired it could be but one, for it would instantly betray the nature of the ship, and the submarines would sink to safety. So it was the practice of the mystery crews to lie patiently behind their frail concealment and bear the fire of the foe until she was convinced that no one was left aboard and would steam up for the customary looting.

That took cool courage. It is one thing to stand a heavy fire behind breastworks that repel all save the luckiest of shots, but quite another to lie behind the flimsiest barrier of wood which would not stop the lightest shell. It is not difficult to brave death when one can fight back, and the red blood of battle runs hot in the veins. But to lie quiet under a pelting hail of lead and iron, to see such shelter as you have blazing around you, to know

that the ship to which you are clinging in the hope of getting just one fair shot at the foe is all the time sinking under your feet—that is a class of service that requires a combination of courage, coolness and discipline that might be thought to be rare, but which was common enough among the men of the mystery fleet.

Sometimes for hours men would lie thus, with the enemy in sight and deliberately pouring upon them a hail of deadly missiles. About them the shells crashed in explosions that racked the ship and sent thousands of deadly missiles flying about the decks. Their comrades fell fast, whole guns' crews being sometimes blotted out. Yet they lay, suffering but determined, watching the submarine as she circled about, ever coming nearer. The foe would be cautiously scrutinizing every inch and line of his victim for signs of danger. The captain of the Britisher for his part would be lying concealed on the deck, his eye at a hidden peephole, his mouth close to a speaking-tube, through which the word of command could be quickly passed to the crew lying breathless beside the hidden gun. Would the German come into direct range? Often the boats containing the refugees from the ship would prove the effective bait. Be sure they stayed so near the ship that if the enemy approached near enough to one of them to hail it she would give the coveted opportunity. As she crept nearer and nearer, or, if she had been reconnoitering from beneath the surface, as the lengthening of the exposed

part of her periscope told that she was rising, the suspense on the ship became tense. At last, she is exposed within a hundred yards. Low commands from the captain on the bridge have kept the gun's crew alert. The shell is in place, the breach-block locked. Comes now the shout which even the men on the submarine can hear:

“LET GO!”

Then the clumsy looking ocean tramp is transformed as by a miracle. The white naval ensign rises to the top of whatever mast may not be shot away. Down drop the bulwarks along the sides, lifeboats, crates, deckhouses all collapse revealing guns which are no sooner seen than they are heard, for their waiting crews spring into action and the seemingly helpless ship becomes a volcano spouting flame, and what is more to the purpose steel, and iron and lead for the destruction of the submarine that fate has delivered into their hands. A “sub” is but a shell. Before a short-range fire of that sort she flies to pieces like a crushed cocoon. Out of her shattered hulk fly the dismembered bodies of her crew. Quickly she begins to sink and soon disappears leaving great smudges of oil, and perhaps a few floating dead to mark her grave.

And then the mystery ship gathers up her boats, patches up her wounded, buries her dead and steams back to port to refit and do it all over again.

The mystery ships were credited with having sunk twelve submarines during the war, of which

four were destroyed by Captain Gordon Campbell, who might well be called the "ace" of this trying service. In his ship, the *Dunraven*, Captain Campbell, with his heroic crew, once held on and waited while shells from a submarine practically blew off the whole stern of his boat, exploding a depth charge of three hundred pounds of high explosive, and setting the ship afire to the imminent menace of the greater store of explosives in her magazine. About the guns were hidden the little groups of devoted men whose duty it was to stay there until a shot could be had at the Hun. On the surface of the sea were floating the lifeboats that had put off in artfully designed panic at the first shot from the Hun. So carefully had panic been imitated that the first lifeboat to be launched was let go with a run, so that all its people were thrown into the sea. They were being picked up by their fellows while the concealed guns' crews left behind were watching eagerly for the submarine to come within range. In this instance the enemy operated from the surface but at such a distance from the ship as to offer little opening for a fair shot. His own gunnery, however, was fatally good. His sense that there was something wrong seemed phenomenally acute. The ship had been stopped. Her people—all of them so far as he could see—had taken to the boats, part of the vessel was in flames, and steam was pouring from artfully designed pipes intended to give the air of a pierced boiler. Yet the suspicious German was still slow to approach. When

at last he did come near a fatal change in the wind blew the smoke from that part of the *Dunraven* that was on fire in such a direction that it proved an efficient smoke screen for the enemy. Never was there worse luck. Captain Campbell could not tell how soon the fire on his ship might reach the magazine and send all skyward in one grand explosion. But if he fired at random into the cloud of smoke that hid the foe, the chances are that he would miss and thereby disclose the character of his ship without injuring the enemy. At the risk of the lives of all on board he held on. But fate was against him. Just as the German was rounding the stern, and approaching the point at which she would be under the muzzles of three rifled cannon the fire reached the explosives at the *Dunraven's* stern and with a mighty roar the ship blew up. The crew of one gun were blown high in air, and the surrounding atmosphere was filled with exploding shells. The character of the ship was at once exposed and instantly the submarine disappeared.

That might have been thought to finish the job so far as that particular enemy was concerned, but, finding that his ship still floated despite serious injuries, Campbell refused to give up. So frightful were the wounds of his ship, which was still blazing fiercely, and so incredible was it that the men who had blown into the air should have escaped with their lives—as in fact they did—that he thought it probable that the Hun would come back to exult over a completely demolished victim.

So he sent out a wireless message to all destroyers and other armed ships to keep outside a radius of thirty miles from the point at which the burning hulk lay. The appearance of a destroyer would of course put the enemy finally on his guard. Then a second "panic party,"—those who were detailed to abandon ship were called—was organized, jumped on a raft and the one remaining boat and rowed away. But there still remained a fighting gang on the ship. They could not work the guns, for these had been exposed to view in the excitement of the explosion, and any crew at them would be in full view of the foe at his periscope. But there were two uninjured torpedoes aboard, and these it was determined to employ on the enemy. In due time curiosity overcame the prudence of the Hun. His periscope appeared and came sneaking alongside the *Dunraven*. The torpedo was launched and missed by a few inches. Wholly oblivious to the attack, for a torpedo, however near, cannot be made out through a periscope, the "sub" went on to the other side of the ship. Then the second torpedo was let fly. Again a miss, by less than a foot. Then a great groan went up from the long-suffering crew. They had launched their last missile. Their ship was burning and sinking fast. Nothing was left but to save themselves, and the wireless began crackling with calls to the destroyers that had been kept at a distance. With the two British relief ships came the United States armed yacht *Noma*. The survivors were gathered

up while the gallant old *Dunraven* went to the bottom.

Though it failed in the effort to destroy the submarine this action rightly ranks as one of the most gallant of the war. In that fine spirit of "hands across the sea," which every one must wish will be strengthened and made enduring by our alliance in this war, Admiral Sims wrote to Captain Campbell a letter of compliment in the course of which he said:

"According to my idea about such matters, the standard set by you and your crew is worth infinitely more than the destruction of a submarine. Long after we are both dust and ashes, the story of this last fight will be a valuable inspiration to British (and American) naval officers and men—a demonstration of the remarkable degree to which the patriotism, loyalty, personal devotion and bravery of a crew may be inspired. I know of nothing finer in naval history than the conduct of the aftergun's crew—in fact, the entire crew of the *Dunraven*."

The men of our navy made a gallant effort to get into the mystery ship game but fate and the sudden ending of the war denied them the opportunity. At the urgency of Admiral Sims the Admiralty assigned them a ship which was named *Santee*, after the old sailing ship of that name the Admiral writes; after the hulk lying at Annapolis to which cadets in disgrace were committed, is what the average navy man would say. Whatever the reason

for the name, the vessel was equipped as a mystery ship, her hull stuffed full of light wood so that she would float long after encountering the expected torpedo, and a crew of volunteers shipped under Commander David C. Hanrahan. The redoubtable Captain Campbell took a great interest in the adventure and helped to train the crew in the art of acting which is not treated of in the "Blue Jackets' Manual." After due training in the harbor of Berehaven the *Santee* dropped out of Bantry Bay and made her way out to sea with the deliberate slouchiness of a typical old hooker. Promptly a submarine sighted her and slipped a torpedo fairly against her hull. With loud cries of distress the panic party went overboard, falling into the water, capsizing boats and generally deporting themselves as might be expected of seamen without naval training or experience in war might do. The ship, though showing a tremendous wound amidships, continued to float, being buoyed up by its cargo; the gun's crews left aboard crouched about their unseen cannon awaiting eagerly the sight of the submarine. But Fritz did not come. The men in the boats, after waiting around as long as might seem reasonable to an enemy bent to their oars and pulled slowly away. Still the eager watchers on the wounded ship vainly strained their eyes for the sight of a periscope. After some hours of watchful and fruitless waiting they gave up in despair and the *Santee* was towed back to port. Before she could be refitted the war was over. Thus America's

share in the mystery ship campaign was brief and not glorious.

At the beginning of the war it was not believed that submarines could be effectively hunted by submarines. The ancient adage, "set a thief to catch a thief," was thought to be without application in this particular case. It was urged that vision underwater from a submarine is as limited as from any other craft. But gradually it dawned upon the naval strategists that most of the time of a submarine is spent on the surface, and that our submarines, concealed under water, could steal upon a German U-boat on the surface as stealthily as the latter sneaks up underwater upon a merchantman. A submarine must spend much of its time on the surface because of the necessities of its power system. It has two sets of engines—electric engines by which it runs when submerged, and oil engines by which it is operated on the surface. Storage batteries are bulky and heavy. As a result the submarines could not carry enough of them to store "juice" for more than fifty hours' consecutive running. When the storage batteries were exhausted the craft was obliged to seek the surface and there fill them again by running the dynamos with its oil engines. The oil engines, in turn, could not be run under water as they consumed oxygen too fast for the limited capacity of the boat.

As a result the greater part of a submarine boat's activity is on the surface. For this reason scientists, anxious to secure precision in language, pre-

fer to call them submersible boats. The German boats did most of their hunting on the surface, and indeed, except when a quarry was actually in sight, or they were in flight from an armed foe, kept the surface all the time. Conditions of prudence compelled them to economize their electrical power in every way, for the plight of a submarine, submerged in the presence of an enemy with her "juice" exhausted is a desperate one. She cannot hold her level without running her engines, unless it be that she is near enough to the bottom to rest there. And she cannot waste much power in feeling around for the bottom, for if the power is exhausted before she reaches a place of safety there is nothing left for her to do but to blow her ballast tanks, and come to the surface with the very excellent chance that the first part of her to be seen will be shot to pieces by a watchful destroyer.

For this reason the greater part of the time of a U-boat was spent on the surface, steaming leisurely about and waiting for her prey. At the first sight of smoke on the horizon she submerged, leaving nothing but the almost invisible periscope above water. Even when running on the surface she was no such mark for the eye as the merchant ship, for as a rule little but her conning tower was exposed and that could hardly be discerned in the vast expanse of waters from a distance of over four miles. A merchantman would be easily visible at four times the distance, and even a destroyer would be in full view of the lurking U-boat long before the

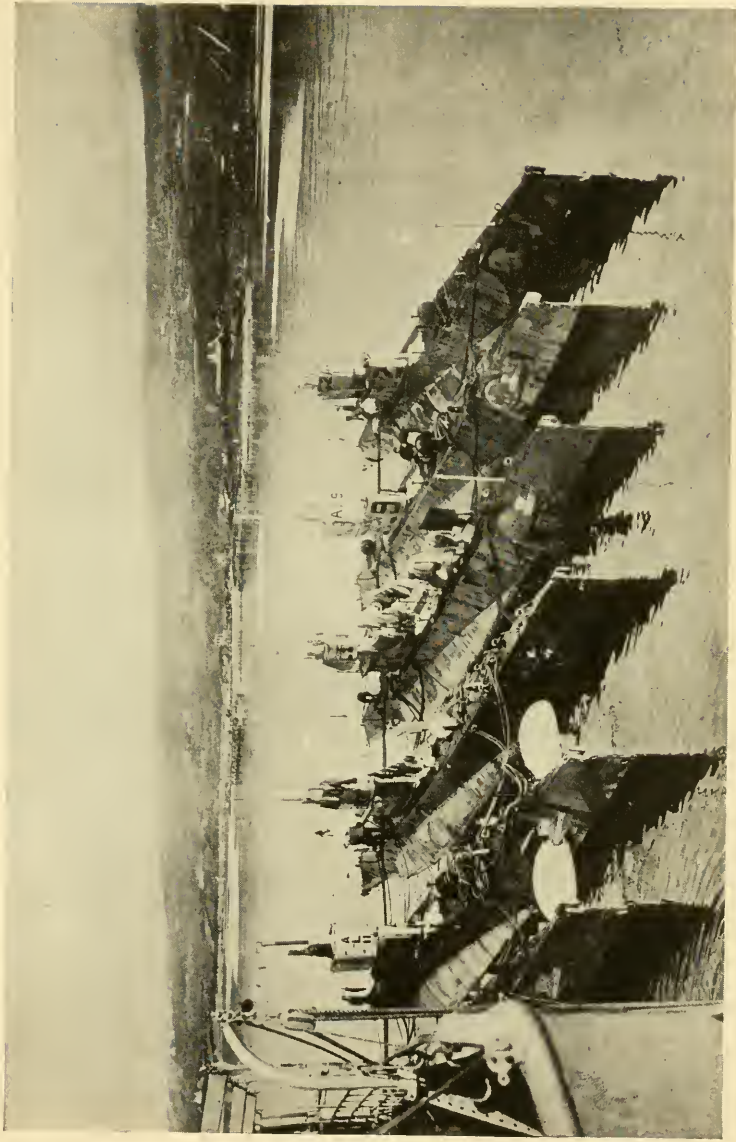
latter could be seen from the bridge of the pursuer.

But all these advantages for the U-boat over the merchantman or destroyer were transferred to the Allied submarine when it started in chase of the underwater enemy. For there were no surface war-ships hunting our subs. They were absolutely safe on the sea except from enemy submarines. To avoid them, or to discover them, they could stay submerged until the last resource of electric power had been exhausted and then come confidently to the surface to run their dynamos again. It was accordingly their strategy to cruise about submerged, at a speed of perhaps a mile an hour, which was enough to maintain the desired depth and yet most sparing of power, and from time to time raise their periscopes for a hasty survey of the horizon. An enemy submarine once discovered was very speedily subjected to the same sinister assault which it had been in the habit of launching against a merchant ship. No second torpedo was ever required for the destruction of a submarine. Its fragile sides could not resist much of a shock and it was built for sinking quite as much as floating. There was short shrift for ship or crew when a torpedo once struck.

The hunt of the submarines for submarines was conducted on systematic principles. The hunters did not merely go out to sea at random and cruise about in the hope of encountering an enemy. Their hunting-ground was rigidly prescribed by the Admiralty. The sections in which the Germans were

operating were well known—at this period in the English Channel, St. George's Channel off Queens-town, and the waters between Ireland and Scotland. These sections of sea were divided up into "squares," and to each a submarine was detailed. Only in case of a chase could a submarine leave the square to which it had been assigned.

A more dismal and monotonous duty than that which fell to the lot of the officers and crews of these cruising submarines can hardly be imagined. The ordinary period of duty was eight days and during that time the men were penned up for all the daylight hours in a narrow steel tube, packed with whirring machinery, stuffy with the odors of oil and of cookery, cold as the temperature of the surrounding sea, with an entire lack of any artificial heat, and so damp that the moisture fairly dripped from the walls. Every man had a station and was virtually confined to that station all day for there could be no moving about at will lest the delicate equilibrium of the boat be impaired. We read about the stillness of the ocean's depths, but the subs seldom descended to those regions of eternal calm. The submarine has a roll all its own, and seasoned surface sailors have been known to be sick during its revolutions. The bunks were narrow and sailors were frequently rolled out of them. The light was wearing on the eyes and the constant motion made reading difficult, while the whir of the machinery, so loud that orders had to be given with signals on a Klaxon, made any concentration of



U. S. Submarines Alongside their "Mother Ship" at Berehaven, Ireland

mind most difficult. For a brief period daily the men were permitted to smoke but it could not be for long. Oxygen was too precious to be wasted in combustion of tobacco, and often the air was so vitiated that only the most vigorous puffing would keep a cigarette going. Every nook and corner is occupied by something. In a submarine there is no such thing as vacant space. Their designers work and plan to find places to put something no bigger than a soap box. The three officers have shelf-like bunks and a small table for meals, but the men sleep in hammocks hung wherever space may be found, and eat off their knees. In fact, life is so miserable and wearing on one of these boats that the presence of sudden acute danger is rather welcomed as a diversion which enables the men to forget the discomfort.

On the American submarines the chief danger was from friends rather than the enemy. German mines were indeed a very present menace, but there were no German surface ships to dread, and so far as the enemy submarines were concerned the chances were that our fellows would see them first. But there was constant danger lest our own ships, naval or merchant, might mistake our "subs" for Huns and attack them. Indeed this occurred in several instances. There was no way of telling the nationality of a submarine until it was entirely out of water and a timid merchant captain with a gun was liable to pop away at the conning tower, or to ram the rising hull without waiting to determine

whether the mysterious stranger were friend or foe.

Statistics as to the precise service accomplished by submarines against submarines are lacking. The claim is made that twenty U-boats were sent to their long account by other underwater craft. But the greatest service was in the effect produced upon the German morale by the activities of our underwater squadron. Before its creation the enemy U-boats had been reasonably safe, since they could always sight an enemy before it could sight them. This advantage was ended when we set submarines to hunting U-boats. It probably destroyed all the usefulness of the big cruising submarines of three thousand tons, with a length of three hundred feet and carrying six-inch guns which the Germans began building in the summer of 1917. They were big enough to keep the sea for two or three months, thus being able to cruise outside the zones in which convoys of destroyers protected the merchant fleets. Their guns were heavy enough to outrange those carried by the destroyers. The enemy had built about twenty of these vessels when the armistice was signed, but they had been little in evidence on the ocean. The only reason for this was that while they were of the very utmost value on a sea defended by surface boats only, they lost their advantage when confronted by submarines. They could not remain long submerged because of the amount of power required by their huge bulk. On the surface they

were almost as visible as a good-sized merchantman, and could not hope to remain immune on any stretch of sea in which our submarines were operating. As a result they remained mainly in safe waters, and though they succeeded in capturing a few ships by virtue of their gun power, proved a decided disappointment to the German naval authorities.

The enemy submarine was fought not only upon the surface of the sea and beneath it, but from the air above as well. Into the full story of the air service of the United States during the war I cannot go. The whole truth concerning that most colossal failure of our boasted American efficiency and inventiveness is not yet known. Enough is known, however, to make Americans ashamed that out of so huge an expenditure of money and of time—at a moment when time was more precious than money—so little should have come except scandal and waste. But the navy—the fighting organization of it—did accomplish no small service in the air, and was in shape to give an excellent account of itself when the sudden cessation of hostilities ended its activities.

The growth of "the navy that flies" is thus summarized in the report of Secretary Daniels of December 8, 1918:

"The expansion of aviation in the navy has been of gratifying proportions and effectiveness. On July 1, 1917, naval aviation was still in its infancy. At that time there

were only 45 naval aviators. There were officers of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard who had been given special training in and were attached to aviation. There were approximately 200 student officers under training, and about 1,250 enlisted men attached to the Aviation Service. These enlisted men were assigned to the three naval air stations in this country then in commission. Pensacola, Fla., had about 1,000; Bay Shore, Long Island, N. Y., had about 100 and Squantum, Mass. which was abandoned in the fall of 1917 had about 150 men. On July 1, 1918, there were 823 naval aviators, approximately 2,052 student officers, and 400 ground officers, attached to naval aviation. In addition there were more than 7,300 trained mechanics, and more than 5,400 mechanics in training. The total enlisted and commissioned personnel at this time was about 30,000."

At the time of the armistice these figures needed further amendment. There were then in the aviation personnel more than forty thousand men, about equally divided between home and foreign stations. Of these 1,665 were qualified flying pilots. Coastal stations were established along the Atlantic seaboard and a regular patrol maintained—a service for which the United States should always be prepared as in war time it may be of vital importance. We had great naval stations in Europe—twenty-seven of them in all, the largest being at Pauillac, France. Here were accommodations for twenty thousand men, though it is needless to say that no such number was ever housed. It was under command of Captain F. T. Evans and

was equipped for the construction of airplanes on a large scale. The end of the war interfered with its activities in this direction, a fact that some people deplored as it would have been worth while seeing whether under the direct command of navy men the manufacture of planes at high pressure could have been conducted without the financial scandals that attended the other efforts of the government to that end. Two air bases were also started in Italy for the purpose of attacking the Austrian naval bases, as from France we were attacking the German submarine nests at Ostend and Zeebrugge. But here again the close of the war prevented completion of the plans.

It has been a matter of just pride to the navy that with its air service it really opened the war-time service of the United States in Europe, for a detachment of American naval airmen reached France and went into action three weeks before the first troopship brought an American soldier to European soil. They had been trained in the United States, some of them even taking up the study a year or more before the United States entered upon the war. A group of students at Yale, under the leadership of Trubee Davison, acting on their own initiative, formed a flying corps, establishing training quarters at Port Washington, supplying their own material, paying all their own expenses and so thoroughly fitting themselves for the work of aviation that when the nation actually and belatedly went in they were ready at once for

active service and formed the nucleus of the First Naval Reserve Flying Corps. All were enrolled in the navy—their names heading the lists. Many were detailed as instructors, both at home and aboard, and many did actual war service in the air.

“I knew that whenever we had a member of that Yale unit,” said Lieutenant-Commander Edwards, who was Aide for Aviation in the latter part of the war, “everything was all right. Whenever the British and the French asked us to send a couple of our crack men to reinforce a squadron I used to say, ‘Let’s get some of the Yale gang.’ We never made a mistake when we did this.”

The largest naval training school for the would-be aviators of the Reserve was at Bayshore, L. I. It was a large plant amply equipped for its work, housing in all about 750 men, of whom about fifty were students, and discharging as trained about two pilots a day at the time of its greatest activity. Only those came to Bayshore who had had the preliminary ground training at other schools. Besides the actual technic of flying they were taught the use of the radio and the Morse code, photography, the mechanics of the engine and the machine gun, bombing, observing and map making. This was indeed the drudgery of the training. The actual mastering of the plane was a comparatively simple feat. A writer on the Naval Reserve, Mr. Frank H. Potter, describes the methods of this training thus:



A Seaplane Ambulance

“When a young aviator arrives at Bayshore he goes through the usual formalities of reporting, being assigned to his squadron, and so on, and is then taken out on a ‘pay hop,’ ‘hop’ be it known is Bayshore slang for a flight, and the ‘pay’ means this: when a student has actually begun his training in flying his pay is increased fifty per cent over the ordinary pay of his rank, and so his first flight is called a ‘pay hop.’

“At first the student aviator is taken up in a two-seated machine with an instructor. He is allowed to hold his hands on the controls but the steering is done by an instructor. After the student gets some sense of balance he is permitted by degrees to steer himself. This continues for several days, the student being allowed to increase his control of the machine every day till the instructor thinks him able to begin ‘solo’ work, that is flying by himself. The length of time which this first stage lasts will depend naturally on the adaptability of each pupil. In rare cases a man has been promoted to solo after only a couple of flights, but in most cases it means six to eight times of such flying with half an hour or more to each flight.

“When the instructor thinks that his pupil is fit to fly alone the student is turned over to a second instructor who goes up with him in a two-seated machine, and who decides whether he shows sufficient proficiency to be promoted. After promotion begins the solo flying, in a single-seater, which generally lasts from thirty to forty hours by which time the young aviator should be proficient in ordinary, plain flying which is all that is taught at Bayshore. When this proficiency is attained the student is graduated from Bayshore and sent on to Pensacola where the stunts are taught—tail spins, vrille, loop-the-loop, and

all the other maneuvers which he will need when he comes to fight the Hun."

Out of the training given in the several naval schools were bred aviators who gave a good account of themselves in the little time left of the war. Indeed, aside from the work of navy aviators, the record of young America in the air, beginning long prior to our entrance upon the struggle was a glorious one. The record of the Lafayette Escadrille, organized by Americans in Paris during the early days of the war, is one of which every American may well be proud, and the boys who came later, wearing our own uniform, were hard put to it to maintain the reputation established by the gallant youths who risked, and in many instances, sacrificed their lives in aid of France before their own country had made up its mind to do its duty.

One of the first of the navy fliers to meet death in combat was Ensign Stephen Potter. This young college man had been in active service only six weeks when he met his first foe in a duel—a German seaplane in Heligoland bight—and after a sharp fight brought it down in flames. Not long after he was out on scout duty for the British when he was overtaken by a force of seven German single-seaters. He was accompanied by another British machine. Although the two were two-seaters, each with a pilot and a gunner they were no match for the enemy, who came down upon them, two planes

at a time. The official report of the battle is as follows:

"Potter's companion had emptied one drum from the forward cockpit when the gun jammed. Two more hostile planes then appeared overhead, attacking vigorously. Both Britons turned to the west pursuing one of the lower enemy who was soon lost to view. Three others, passed astern, followed at a sharp angle. Potter was close above his companion, and dove to within a hundred feet of the water.

"Both machines flattened out, and Potter's companion being faster, throttled down until Potter came abreast. They ran westward in this formation at full speed for several minutes under continuous volleys from the rear.

"Four more enemy machines now appeared in V formation. Of the seven Germans in attack four attacked Potter and the others engaged his companion. Potter fell behind and began to zigzag. He first veered slightly to starboard and then turned at right angles to port.

"Again his companion throttled down to let him catch up, and began climbing to reduce headway. Potter dodged again but was then broadside to all enemy machines, and under their fire only fifty feet from the water. His companion flying above saw Potter's machine burst into flames, come down part of the way under control, then crash on the port wing-tip.

"Potter was last seen on the surface amid flames that turned suddenly to a huge cloud of smoke."

The records of the air service of the navy are full of instances of personal daring, of great risks encountered and overcome, of death met bravely

in the pursuit of duty. Most of the men in the service were mere boys, many of them college undergraduates who had laid down their books in the midst of term to serve their country and civilization. One finds a certain disappointment in reading of their exploits in the fact that most of them were performed in British planes—for the United States did better in training aviators than in building machines for them to fly. The famous wreck in which Ensign E. A. Stone, U.S.N., nearly lost his life, being rescued after floating in a broken plane for nearly eighty hours on turbulent sea was the wreck of a British seaplane which he was at the time piloting.

There is a feeling, not wholly without justification, that aerial service over the sea is less perilous than over land. To some extent this is true. The sea offers a readier temporary refuge in case that an aviator is compelled by engine trouble to vol-plane down to safety. It is not studded with woods, ravines, rocky places or crowded cities making landing impossible. But once on solid land the aviator is safe. Even if he succeeds in reaching the surface of the water with his seaplane his troubles have but begun. For the seaplane is not a seaworthy craft. On a very ordinary swell it speedily racks itself to pieces. The broad wings catch the roll of the swells and pull the structure this way and that until it becomes a mere mass of wreckage on the waters.

Stone was acting as pilot of a British seaplane

with a British sub-lieutenant as gunner, and out on patrol in the Channel. They sighted a periscope and started out in pursuit of it, but while on the chase their engine dropped dead and they were forced to volplane down to the surface of a rough sea. They had no radio aboard, but, like all cruising planes, carried two carrier pigeons. To the legs of these birds they tied scraps of tissue paper, giving latitude, and longitude and the significant word "sinking." One bird flew straight away with its message, but the other one, seemingly dazed, or perhaps terrified by the expanse of water, refused to leave the plane, and perched on the tip of its wing. By way of ousting him they threw a navigation clock—the only thing movable at hand—at him which apparently frightened him still more, for though he disappeared he never reached home.

A seaplane afloat on the waves, when the sea is at all rough, goes to pieces rapidly and the great weight of the engine tends to draw her down. In this case the seas beating against the covering of the wings were fast battering the light fabric to pieces. The two castaways got out their knives and cut away the cloth as far as possible, but she continued sinking by the stern until she finally rose perpendicularly in the sea, and they had to climb over her nose and cling to the bottom of the pontoons. As far as they could see was nothing but gray and tossing water. They were but a speck in the waste with no way of making their plight known. There was no place to lie down, to stretch

themselves, or to relieve in any way their strained and cramped muscles. Now and then they had the trying experience of seeing a ship go by in the distance without possessing any means of attracting her attention. Hours passed into days—in all they were four days on the tossing ocean. They had neither food nor drink. Their emergency ration was in the observer's seat in the back, but when they remembered this and sought to get it the equilibrium of the wreck was such that to climb back to that point would have pulled the whole fabric under. Not only had they to starve with the knowledge that within ten or fifteen feet was food in sufficiency, but every now and then they saw tins of biscuit from torpedoed ships drifting by, but were too weak and chilled to swim for them. One tin that they did manage to pull in when opened proved to contain tobacco—a cruel disappointment.

Once they had the bitter experience of seeing a seaplane fly over their heads, not more than eight hundred feet up. It flew past despite their cries for aid, went on about two miles, and came back directly over them. It gave every indication of being in search of them, but its observers failed to pick them out of the welter of water.

Their rescue finally came through a trawler which sighted them but hesitated about approaching lest it be a trap of the Germans. When they actually reached their home station they learned that every machine from their home base, and sev-

eral from a French station, had been flying over the Channel for three days looking for them.

The work of our naval aviators was mainly in patrolling, and in assisting in the convoy of merchantmen. Not only did the elevated position of the observer in a plane give him a great advantage in discerning a conning tower or even a periscope in the distance, but submerged subs were not infrequently made out from the air. Every boy knows that standing on a bridge and looking down into the water one can frequently see fish that are entirely invisible from the shore. From a seaplane a submarine steaming along thirty or forty feet below the surface could frequently be clearly discerned. Like giant fish-hawks the seaplanes circled about over the submarine-infested areas seeking incessantly for their prey. Unlike the bird they did not drop bodily to the water on sighting a victim, but dropped a depth bomb instead. According to Admiral Sims of thirty-nine direct attacks made upon submarines from the air ten were in varying degrees successful. He cites as an instance of the "hard luck" which may attend the most skillful endeavors the exploit of Ensign J. McNamara, who dropped a bomb from high in air so accurately that it struck fair in the middle of the conning tower of the target. Under normal conditions one submarine with her whole crew would have been sent to their long account. But the bomb proved to be a dud, and rolled harmlessly off into the water, the sub continuing her way probably wholly

unaware of the incident. It may be noted that not only is there no possible defense against aerial attack upon a submarine, but when the threatened boat is running submerged her commander is wholly unaware of the menace, since the periscope is available for surface observation only and discerns nothing more than a few feet above the horizon.

It is reasonable to anticipate that the next war, if one shall unhappily come, will be fought very largely from the air. It is to be feared too that more than ever before it will be a war in which non-combatants will suffer almost as much as the enrolled military and naval forces. The development toward the close of this war, in United States factories, of a type of poison gas one bombful of which dropped from an airplane would depopulate half a square mile in a crowded city affords some hint of the terrors in store for humanity, unless statesmanship is able to devise some way of making war impossible. And until that device is perfected it behooves the United States to be prepared in every way to ward off attack by sea and sky.

Our national energy enabled us to make a reasonably good showing toward the end of the war, but it must be remembered that we were engaged with an enemy who could not by any possibility attack our coasts. Had he been able to do so, with his admitted superiority in aircraft, there would have been a sorry story to tell. As it is the record of our accomplishment sounds impressive. When the

armistice was signed we had 225 American air-planes operating over the North Sea, the Irish Sea, the Adriatic and the Bay of Biscay. We had bombing planes at work over the battlefields of Flanders. And in our "navy that flies" there were fifteen thousand men engaged in hunting submarines, bombing bases, patrolling, convoying and observing. The total personnel was increased during the war to nearly fifty thousand men, and the casualties suffered in the naval air service amounted to two hundred and eight.

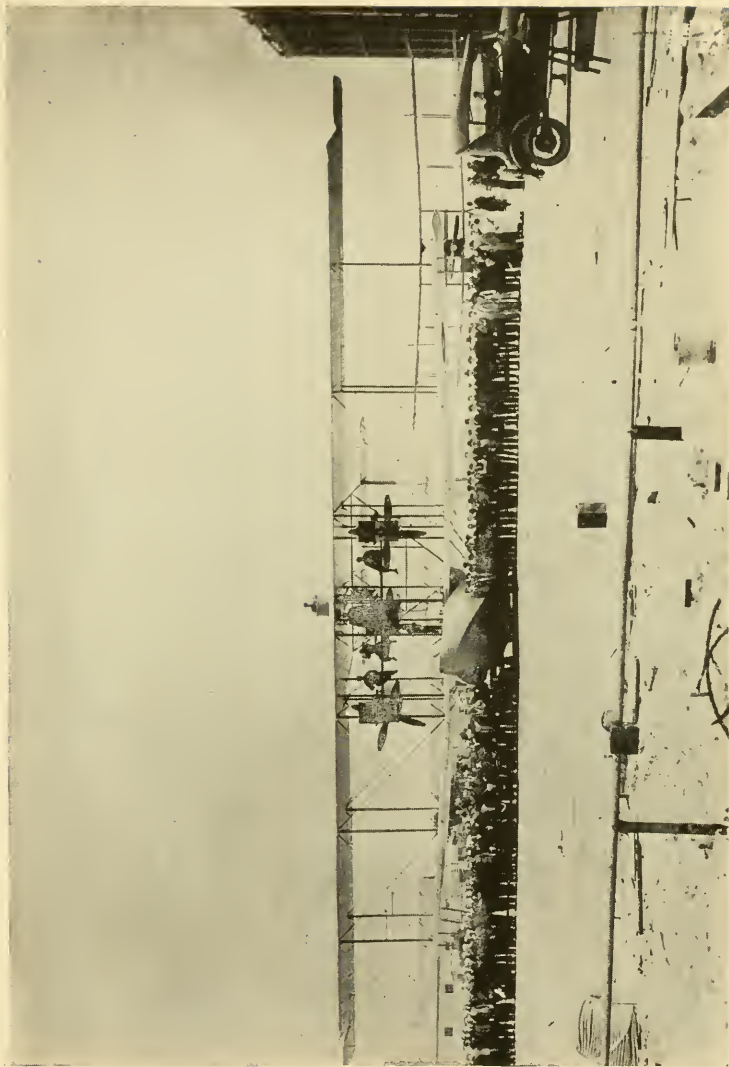
Like every other factor in our national defense the naval aviation service was subjected to severe pruning immediately peace had been declared. The personnel was ordered cut to five thousand, at which figure it will presumably be maintained. The twenty-five bases in Europe were of course abandoned, and all ground schools in the United States except that at Great Lakes are closed. The Department's peace programme calls for the maintenance of six heavier than air coastal stations in permanence, and the obvious utility of these for other than warlike purposes gives reason to believe that they will be supported by Congress.

One triumph of naval aviation succeeded the war, although the initial steps for it were taken in the earlier days of that conflict.

May 26, 1919, a huge flying boat displaying the Stars and Stripes appeared off the harbor of Lisbon where a great throng awaited its coming. It was the successful conclusion of the first transatlantic

flight, and had been accomplished by a flying boat of the United States navy, manned by a navy crew and commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Albert C. Read, U.S.N.

The ship was the *NC-4*, one of four machines the planning and construction of which had been begun by the Navy Department as long before as September, 1917. Three of these great machines, which were equipped with Liberty motors, had a lifting capacity of twenty-five thousand pounds, and had been tested out carrying fifty-one passengers, were given the task of crossing the ocean from Nova Scotia with but one stop—at the Azores. The three left the Rockaway naval station, on Long Island, and coasted along to Halifax whence the final start was to be made. After tuning up, the three made what aviators have come to call the “hop-off” on the 16th of May. In fuel and food they were carrying all the load their power permitted. All along the route destroyers and cruisers were stationed, their wireless men alert for news of the coming of the great birds, their lookouts all eyes for the first visible sign of their approach. The three airships sped along through rain and shine, clouds and fair weather. Sometimes they were within sight of each other, sometimes clouds blocked their sight but the roar of their powerful engines kept them in touch. They steered of course by compass, but every little while the sight of a destroyer below, or the gleam of a star-shell sent up from one of these patrols, sometimes fifty miles



Showing the Size of a Naval Airplane of the N.C.-4 Type

away, gave assurance that they were on their right course. All of the flyers were equipped with radio apparatus and could thus keep in touch with their guides. They had before them at the outset a straightaway flight of 1,380 miles over stormy waters and the knowledge that they could at all times summon aid and guidance must have been a material comfort.

Fog, the most dangerous enemy of all navigators whether by sea or sky, enveloped all three ships after they had been ten or twelve hours in the air, and just as all the pilots were feeling confident of success. The *NC-1* was forced to give up her flight and descend to the water. She lay there pounding in heavy seas, with her crew working desperately to keep her afloat until sighted by the steamer *Ionia*. The officers and crew were taken off and the craft soon sunk. The *NC-3*, was little more fortunate. She was forced down at a point about thirty-five miles from Fayal. The Secretary of the Navy tells the story of her failure thus:

“When the *NC-3*, caught in the fog, descended to the water, she encountered heavy seas. Rain squalls occurred during the night and the next morning she had to face a gale. Destroyers were searching for her, but her radio apparatus failed, and she could not flash them her location. After tossing on the ocean for a day and night, the morning of May 18 her port wing pontoon was suddenly carried away, and men had to be placed on the starboard wing to keep the port wing clear of the water. The high seas soon afterwards began to break the ribs of the

lower plane and split the fabric. A steep wave lifted the bow and forced under the water the lower elevator, which began to disintegrate and was finally swept off. The cables of the sea anchors parted. The hull was leaking badly, and the pumps had to be kept going.

"The sun came out and the top of Mount Pico was sighted, showing that land was only 35 miles away. But the 60-mile wind and heavy seas made hopeless any attempt to reach Pico, and it was decided to endeavor to work toward San Miguel. Taking advantage of every lull in the waves and making a course slightly across the wind, by the use of ailerons and rudder, some progress was made, increasing as the pilots gained experience in this untried navigation. The heavy wind and seas continued throughout the night, and by daylight practically nothing was left of the lower wings except the beams, heavy wings between struts and the starboard wing pontoon.

"Early in the morning San Miguel was sighted, and the course was changed toward Ponta Delgada. When 7 miles off the harbor the plane was sighted from shore and thirteen minutes later the destroyer *Harding* came into sight, standing out at full speed. Her offer of assistance was refused, the *NC-3* proceeding under her own power. A few minutes later a cross-sea swept off the starboard pontoon, which, dragging in the water, almost capsized the seaplane. But by keeping men ready to run out on the wings and using the three available engines, the *NC-3* taxied to her mooring, reaching Ponta Delgada at 4:50 P.M., having been on the water for 53 hours, drifting and taxiing 209 miles in the endeavor to reach port. Officers and crew had suffered hunger as well as other hardships, for their sandwiches had fallen in the bilge when the plane descended, and the crew subsisted almost entirely upon a few cakes of choco-

late, as the emergency rations created extreme thirst, and the radiator water, all they had left to drink, was very unpalatable. But the aviators were in good spirits, in spite of their distressing experiences."

The two ships that failed had come within half an hour's run of their destination. But fate intervened to snatch from them the prize. The winner, which at the outset had seemed to be less fortunate than the others, made the emergency stop at Horta, waited there four days for better weather conditions, and then put off on the last leg of 891 miles to Lisbon. This distance she covered in 9 hours, 43 minutes. After an enthusiastic reception at Lisbon, she continued her flight to Plymouth, England, the port whence our Pilgrim Fathers had sailed for America. It seemed a fitting thing that so soon after the close of the great war in which English and Americans had fought side by side the first man to cross the Atlantic by air should pay his devoirs at this shrine of all Anglo-Americans.

CHAPTER VIII

Fear of German submarine raids.—Chance for enemy enterprise.—Raids on American shipping.—Sinking of the *Edward S. Cole* and the *Hattie Dunn*.—Prisoner on a submarine.—Extent of ravages along our coast.—The gallant fight of the *Luckenback*.

WHEN the United States had determined to play its part among nations and enter upon the war for the defense of civilization against the aggressions of the Hun there was for a time some apprehension lest our coastwise shipping and even seaport towns might suffer. For this there was some excuse. The German merchant submarine, *Deutschland*, had made two visits to our coasts eluding the British patrols, and not detected by any of our armed vessels—though to be sure at the time of her voyages the latter were not particularly concerned with the movements of German craft. The *U-53* too, had made its memorable visit to Newport and had exercised its destructive power upon enemy and neutral vessels within sight of a band of our destroyers.

It was apparent therefore that if the German 'Admiralty chose it might send submarines to our Atlantic seaboard, raise havoc with our coastwise shipping, and even slip up close enough to some of our harbors to send a shot or two into our cities.

Such a vessel as the *Deutschland* could readily have mounted a six-inch gun, and have come within easy shelling distance of any one of half a dozen seaports on our Atlantic coast. As a fact the Germans had at that time begun building their submersible cruisers, any one of which might have undertaken such an adventure with every certainty of wreaking wide damage and spreading panic here, and with at least an even chance of escaping after the raid had been completed.

It is impossible to study the history of this greatest of all wars without reaching the conclusion that something in the German character unfitted that people from seafaring dash and adventure. That so magnificent a fleet as theirs should have been doomed to rust in ignoble inactivity throughout a war which the German people were told was for national existence would be unbelievable if it were not history. And that they should have left untried the opportunity to raid one or two American seaport towns is almost equally incredible. Even if the submarine paid for its audacity by going to the bottom with all on board a few cannon shot dropped into even our smaller towns like Portland, Me., Portsmouth, New London, Atlantic City or Charleston would have caused such a diversion of the United States navy from its work in European waters as would have been of incalculable benefit to the Germans. We have seen how vital to the very continuance of England's part in the war was the work of the convoys in which our navy took a lead-

ing part. If it had been summoned back to home waters none can tell what the result might have been.

Nor is it at all certain that such a raid might not have inflicted serious damage upon the American town attacked without the loss of the assailing force. If there had been in the German navy any of that spirit that animated Paul Jones when, with a mere handful of men, he made his descents upon Whitehaven and St. Mary's Island; if they had been fired by the courage and dash that Decatur showed when he led his men into the harbor of Tripoli and destroyed the *Philadelphia* under the guns of the Bashaw's palace; if in the German veins had flowed that red fighting blood that pulsed in the arteries of the English sailors who climbed the mole at Zeebrugge and cleaned out that nest of submarines—then indeed might some American city have heard the sound of shells bursting in its streets and known how Paris felt under the fire of the German long-range gun.

To some extent an attack of this sort by the enemy was anticipated at the outset of the war. Nets were stretched across the Narrows to keep submarines out of New York harbor, and for the entire period of the conflict vessels were not permitted to enter or to leave between sunset and sunrise. A few destroyers and a number of submarine chasers were kept cruising up and down the coast, while merchant skippers and the infrequent yachtsmen of war time were seeking periscopes by the

score. But the Germans were slow in coming. At no time during the war did the apprehended attack on a seaport occur. That apparently never suggested itself to the German Admiralty. It was fortunate for us for at that time the series of aviation stations which were devised for the protection of the coast had not been established. It would be difficult to overestimate the importance to our national defense of such a series of stations. The normal speed of airplanes being well in excess of eighty miles an hour and of blimps and larger dirigibles almost as great, it is evident that with observation stations along the coast at intervals of say two hundred miles no point would be more than an hour or so of emergency steaming from help by the air. With swift destroyers to follow the speedier airships the response in case of a sudden alarm would be too speedy to permit an enemy to make a very serious attack and escape.

Whatever the opportunity may have been for the enemy he did not seize it. No American port ever heard the sound of a German gun and no hostile shell ever burst in one of our streets. Such activities as the enemy's navy manifested on our coast were confined to sinking merchant ships—a sort of inglorious warfare to which the famous navy of von Tirpitz was in the main confined.

It was in May, 1918, that the work of the enemy began to be felt among the shipping on our Atlantic coast. Whether there was but one submarine or a group of them was not known, indeed has not yet

been learned, but in a little less than a month twenty steamers and sailing ships, mostly of American register, had been sent to the bottom.

Our naval authorities had been warned. The British Intelligence Department, with that singular skill in detective work which amazed the world, had notified our naval authorities that two German cruising submarines believed to be of the improved type with a cruising radius of ten thousand miles, and carrying two guns of four- or five-inch caliber had left the North Sea. There was every reason to anticipate that they were headed westward for a raid on our coasts. While the danger was kept locked in the secrecy of the Navy Department, all of our armed vessels in west Atlantic waters were instructed to look out for the raiders. But the ability of the submarine to evade detection had its fullest illustration at this time, for not a single armed ship which was searching for the enemy discovered him, while he for his part had no difficulty in finding plenty of our unarmed vessels for his prey.

The first news of action by these new invaders was brought to New York City on June 4th by Captain Newcomb of the American four-masted schooner, *Edward S. Cole*. This vessel, when about fifty miles southeast of Barnegat, N. J., was suddenly confronted by a submarine which was described as being about two hundred feet long with five feet free board and carrying two three-inch guns fore and aft, and a rapid firer amidships. The



Germany's Most Useful Present to Uncle Sam, the Huge *Leviathan*, greatest of All
the Ferryboats to France

mate of the *Cole*, who first discovered the unwelcome stranger, thought that it was merely an American submarine with naval reserve men aboard who were trying to frighten a Yankee skipper. He thought he would join in the game, and so, as he put it, "In order to have a little fun with our captain who had turned in for a nap in his cabin, I yelled down the skylight, 'Tumble up on deck lively, Cap, there's a big submarine close astern getting ready to attack us.' Then I took the marine glasses and looked through them at the stern of the U-boat, where her ensign was flapping limply against the short flagstaff. For a moment or two I could not make out her nationality, and then a gust of wind came and blew the ensign straight so that I could see that it was the German flag, and then I shouted in earnest to Captain Newcomb, 'It's no joke this time. By gosh, she is a German submarine!'"

The visitor promptly showed her quality by giving the crew of the *Cole* ten minutes to leave her and then placing bombs in her hull exploded them, sending her to the bottom in a few moments.

Only a few days later boats were picked up by a coastwise steamer containing a number of men who were the survivors of several schooners that had been sunk by the submarine, as well as of the tank steamer, *Isabel Wiley*. The crews of the schooners had been taken aboard the U-boat and held prisoners, until the destruction of the tanker gave the Hun more guests than he could accommodate, when

all were bundled into the *Wiley's* boats and set adrift.

Captain Charles E. Holbrook, master of the Maine schooner, *Hattie Dunn*, told his story of the destruction of his ship and his own brief captivity in this fashion :

"We left New York for Charleston in ballast on May 23. Two days later we were about fifteen miles south of Winter Quarter light-ship, bowling along under an eight-knot breeze. I heard a shell pass near the vessel. Then another shell, which fell perhaps a quarter of a mile away. I was not taking much notice because I believed the vessel, which I saw about two miles away, was an American submarine at target practice. A third shell exploded close by us on the weather quarter and I knew that whoever it was wanted us to stop. I brought the vessel up into the wind.

"The submarine, with her superstructure and conning-tower showing plainly above the water, came within two hundred yards, and I saw that she was flying the two code letters, 'A. B.,' meaning 'Stop immediately.'

"From a small staff at the rear end of the superstructure fluttered a small flag of the Imperial German Navy. An officer and three men came over in a small boat, not over twelve feet long, and in perfect English the officer told us to get into our boats and that we had but ten minutes allotted to us to get clear of our vessel.

"They placed bombs along the sides of our vessel and blew her up immediately, in the meantime putting an armed German sailor on board the small boat, in which were seven men and myself. This did not give me time to rescue my personal effects and nautical instruments, and so I lost them all. My men saved only what they stood in.

"Perhaps I would have been given more time if the commander of the submarine had not seen the *Hauppauge* under full sail about four or five miles away. Like us, the *Hauppauge* was light and, I understand, bound from Portland to Newport News. The U-boat destroyed Captain Sweeney's fine new schooner after ordering him and his crew to take to their boats, and within a half-hour both crews were on board the submarine and both the small boats had been placed on the submarine's deck and lashed down.

"We were kept below for several hours, until the submarine picked up Captain Gilmore and the *Edna*, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Then, I guess, the commander thought he had done a good day's work, for he was in excellent humor, and told us captains that we could go on deck and have a smoke. He did not extend liberty to the others that day, but later they got their chance once in a while."

The Maine skipper was a good sailor man, but he did not like his brief experience on a submarine. A good schooner and the surface of the sea for him. He declared that the U-boat submerged several times when he was aboard and at one occasion it came to rest on the bottom of the ocean where he ate his dinner. The experience did not improve his appetite. It had evidently been the intention of the captain of the U-boat to set his prisoners free at an early opportunity, for he lashed their boats to his deck as if intending to use them later. But the pressure of the water when he submerged smashed them to fragments. The prisoner was

much puzzled by the continual working of the wireless outfit of the submarine. They were more than three thousand miles from the nearest German wireless station. There were no German ships afloat on the ocean. With whom could they have been talking? Dark suspicions of German spies ashore haunted his mind. "There were times when I could hear them using their wireless," he said. "One night the spluttering was so loud it woke me up. They were sending messages either to another ship or to some shore station. Every night the operators listened to press bulletins sent out from America, and one of them told me of the battle drive now on in France. They also said that a Whitehead torpedo factory had been blown up in Austria last week."

The German may have been one of the monster cruising submarines of which we have been told, but he did not despise small game. The schooner *Edna*, Captain Gilmore with a crew of six men, met him on the voyage from Philadelphia to Cuba. Captain Gilmore lost his ship at the hands of the enemy on whose boat he was held captive for a week or more. But to judge from his report of his treatment he not only bore no malice, but thought his captor

". . . The mildest manner'd man
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat."

In his account of the destruction of his ship he said:

"The submarine came right up to us. The small boat was lowered and an officer came aboard, telling me, 'You have ten minutes in which to abandon ship.' When I was telling the men how to get the boat, which was lashed on the deck, clear, the lieutenant told me to come below.

"I suppose I acted as if I was in a hurry to get away from the ship, but when we got below the lieutenant said: 'Don't get excited, captain. Take your time. We'll be around here an hour and a half.' So I picked up everything I could think of that belonged to me, and when I got over to the submarine I found I'd left my new silk umbrella. After they blew up the schooner the Germans rowed back to the submarine, and I found that besides the few things they had picked up for themselves, they had brought my umbrella."

After this considerate treatment the Yankee captain and his crew were taken aboard the submarine. Of his experience there, Captain Gilmore added:

"The officers of the submarine included a spare captain who was apparently on hand to take charge of any prize that might be worth while turning into a raider, the commander of the U-boat itself and two others. These gave up their berths to me and the master of the *Hattie Dunn*, and the Germans of the crew gave up their bunks to the sailors and slept in hammocks themselves. The officers gave us wine, cordials and fine cigars and in general treated us with such marked hospitality that it seemed apparent that they were carrying out a course which had been laid upon them. The commander said that he had fuel and supplies for a month in American waters and intended to stay here for that time before going back."

It is wholly probable as the shrewd Yankee skipper surmised that the commander of this submarine had been ordered to treat his involuntary guests with courtesy and even hospitality. His action in this regard was in marked contrast to the attitude of the commanders of U-boats in European waters who did not scruple to turn their guns on the small boats containing refugees from the vessels they had sunk or even to run them down. Probably the reason for this friendliness to individual Americans was the same that explains the failure of the Germans to raid any of our seaport towns, or to make savage attacks on our loaded transports. It is impossible not to conjecture that from the moment the United States entered upon the war it was the policy of the German government to avoid as much as possible stimulating any more hatred of Germany in the American mind than could be helped. They might "strafe" England, but with Americans their methods of warfare were as nearly humane as war can be made. It was obviously done with shrewd political foresight and purpose.

The largest ship to fall before the assault of this unidentified enemy was the five thousand-ton passenger steamer *Carolina*, belonging to the New York and Porto Rico Steamship Line, although the *Herbert L. Pratt*, of seventy-two hundred tons was attacked but not sunk. Passengers and crew of the *Carolina* numbered 331, all of whom were put into boats prior to the sinking of the ship. Owing to a heavy storm which overtook them before they

could reach the coast a motor launch carrying twenty-six overturned, and seven of its passengers were drowned. All of the remainder were picked up by passing merchant vessels. In all, twenty ships were sunk in this raid, three of which were Norwegian and therefore neutral. The apparent cruising radius of the enemy was along the coast between Chesapeake Bay within possibly one hundred miles of New York. Destroyers, submarine chasers and aeroplanes were sent out in great numbers to locate the enemy but without success and no vessel ever saw her and escaped to bring the report home.

An incident of the submarine campaign that did not occur on our coast is so illustrative of the methods employed to beat off the enemy that it may well be told here. It describes in graphic form the way in which the patrolling destroyers picked out of the air the cries of a ship set upon the enemy, how they sped to the attack, and how in at least one case American dash, courage and seamanship overcame the Hun.

It was early in October that the wireless men on the destroyers that were convoying a large fleet of British merchantmen to the east coast of England suddenly plucked from the air messages telling of the distress of an American ship. So far as the eye could see all was peaceful. But the air currents which throughout the war teemed with news flashed from hundreds of radios told that ninety miles away the American ship, *J. L. Luckenback*,

was being shelled by a submarine. In the official reports the story is told in this brief dialogue flashed through the air and noted down by the radio men:

"8:50 A.M. S. O. S. *J. L. Luckenback* being gunned by submarine. Position 48.08 N. 9.31 W.

"9:25 *Conyngham* to *Nicholson*. Proceed to assistance of S. O. S. ship.

"9:30 *Luckenback* to U. S. A.: Am maneuvering around.

"9:35 *Luckenback* to U. S. A.: How far are you away?

"9:40 *Luckenback* to U. S. A.: Code books thrown overboard. How soon will you arrive?

"*Nicholson* to *Luckenback*: In two hours.

"9:41 *Luckenback* to U. S. A.: Look for boats. They are shelling us.

"*Nicholson* to *Luckenback*: Do not surrender!

"*Luckenback* to *Nicholson*: Never!

"11:01 *Nicholson* to *Luckenback*: Course south magnetic.

"12:36 P.M. *Nicholson* to *Conyngham*: Submarine submerged 47.47 N. 10.00 W. at 11:20.

"1:23 *Conyngham* to *Nicholson*: What became of steamer?

"3:41 *Nicholson* to Admiral (at Queenstown) and *Conyngham*: *Luckenback* now joining convoy. Should be able to make port unassisted."

The *Luckenback* was in fact saved by the courage and pertinacity of her commander who refused to surrender even though he knew there was grave doubt as to whether aid would arrive in season. Distant ninety miles when the first S.O.S. call was

received, the destroyers put on their forced draft, pushed up their speed and made all possible haste to the scene of the attack. Thirty miles an hour is about the best speed that a destroyer can maintain for any length of time, and as a result the submarine had nearly three hours in which to work her will upon the helpless merchantman. It will be noticed from the report of the messages that the first news of the attack was received at ten minutes of nine, while the moment at which the submarine abandoned the attack was twelve thirty-six P.M. Had the enemy been willing to use a torpedo on the *Luckenback* he could undoubtedly have destroyed her. But at this period of the war the Germans were very saving of their torpedoes, which had become difficult to obtain. As it was, the time was ample for the destruction of the vessel by shell-fire except for what was obviously the poor gunnery of the enemy. When aid arrived the *Luckenback* was on fire and her cargo of cotton in flames. She was, however, in sufficiently good shape to be towed into port. The commander of the *Nicholson*, who effected the rescue, reports that the submarine submerged after his first shot. Oddly enough the destroyer had hardly rejoined its convoy when one of the ships, the *Orama*, was destroyed by a torpedo from an unseen submarine. It was thought to be wholly probable that this was the same underwater boat that had attacked the *Luckenback*.

CHAPTER IX

The men of the Marine Corps.—“Devil Dogs” or “Leather-Necks.”—An historic record of daring.—Character of the men.—Nature of their training.—Their heavy losses.—The great German drive.—Marines at Château-Thierry.—The battle of Belleau Wood.—A personal narrative.—Nature of the terrain.—Fighting tactics of the Marines.—Report of Secretary Daniels.—Sergeants John Quick and Dan Daly.

AT sea the true blue jacket rather sniffs at the marine, calls him “soldier” or “leather-neck,” and looks on him somewhat in the light of a policeman—which was in fact the marine’s original function in all navies. But these soldiers of the sea have won for themselves a reputation for ready effectiveness and gallantry in all services, and not least of all in our own. Kipling called the British marine

“. . . her Majesty’s Jollies
Soldier and sailor too.”

In our own service they have come to be called “devil dogs.”

Just how the name originated seems to be lost to tradition, but the title appeals to the men of the corps and right gloriously they live up to it. They form a small corps, but insist that they are the élite of the nation’s armed service. They have pride of antiquity, for while they are under control

of the Secretary of the Navy the foundation of their corps antedates that of the Navy Department itself. They are as cosmopolitan as the fleet, and the infinite variety of their service cannot perhaps be better told than in the words of one of their own poets:

“They’ve fought with Tripolitan pirates
They’ve handed the English a few,
They’ve bowed the proud necks of the Spanish
and Mex,
And they’ve walloped the Chinaman too.
They’ve reasoned with Zulu and Malay,
They’ve fought in our own Civil War,
And they’ve had a few scraps with the little
brown Japs,
And with Gu-gus way out in Samar.”

But the story of the historic services of the United States Marine Corps, and of the quiet effectiveness that has given the dispatch, “The marines were landed and have the situation well in hand,” all the force of an accepted formula is another story.* Here I shall tell only of what they did in the service of civilization in the great World War—and tell that in a chapter though the telling might well fill a volume.

When the Declaration of War was signed the Marine Corps possessed an actual strength of 344 officers and 14,981 men. A larger corps was au-

* See “Soldiers of the Sea” by Willis J. Abbot. Dodd, Mead & Co., N. Y., 1919.

thorized by law but had never been enlisted. Those in the service were veterans, not merely in years with the colors but in point of actual war service in the field. They had smelled powder in both hemispheres. They had within a very few months been fighting at Vera Cruz, in Haiti and Santo Domingo. About 1,750 were on ships while the remainder were scattered about enforcing the authority of the United States wherever it was defied.

Immediately the work began of increasing the numbers of the corps. The first law for this purpose, enacted by Congress in May, 1917, provided for a personnel of thirty thousand enlisted men. This figure was gradually increased until at the end of the war there were nearly sixty thousand enlisted men wearing the marine insignia. Rapid as was the increase in numbers the high standard that had always characterized the corps was not lowered. It was not easy to get into the marines. Physically, morally and mentally the applicant for enlistment had to prove himself fit. And already the reputation of the corps was so high that it had practically the pick of the young patriots who wanted to serve their country. In speaking of the Sixth Regiment of Marines, General Catlin, who drilled it, says:

“I must tell something of this sixth regiment of mine. . . . The officers from captain up, and fifty or so of the non-commissioned officers were old-time marines, but the junior officers and all of the privates were new men. They

were of superior quality throughout, and they had been through the intensive training of the Marine Corps. By the time they were through the training on French soil I doubt if any army officer could have discovered the slightest trace of newness about them. They acted like veterans, they thought like veterans, and all because of that training and the material they were to start with.

"They were as fine a bunch of upstanding American athletes as you would care to meet and they had brains as well as brawn. Sixty per cent of the entire regiment—mark this—sixty per cent of them were college men. Two-thirds of one entire company came straight from the University of Minnesota. . . . The Turk will fight like a fiend; the Moro's trade is slaying; it was Fuzzy-Wuzzy who broke a British square; the Boche will move in mass formation into the face of death like a ferry-boat entering its slip; but when the final show-down comes, when the last ounce of strength and nerve is called for, when mind and hand must act like lightning together, I will take my chances with an educated man, a free-born American with a trained mind. Unquestionably the intelligent, educated man makes in the long run the best soldier. There is no room for the mere brute in modern warfare. It is a contest of brains as well as brawn and the best brains win. The American colleges doubtless supposed they were turning men into scholars; when the test came they found they had been training soldiers."

But the officers intrusted with developing the Marine Corps were not content with the training the colleges had given their recruits. It takes savage drill and wrought-iron discipline to make a perfect marine. Training camps were

established at Mare Island, Cal., and at Paris Island, S. C., while for the finishing touches before sending the fighting men overseas a great camp was maintained at Quantico, Va., near the national capital. Here the men were drilled, and drilled, and then drilled some more until their bodies responded instinctively to the word of command. They were taught to shoot, to thrust the bayonet with deadly aim at an enemy's vitals, to cut wire and to string wire, to dig trenches and to clamber out of them at the cry of "over the top!" They were taught the use of the machine gun, and to stand steady in the face of the murderous clatter of those infernal engines of death. They hiked until every bone ached, and they slept like logs until the notes of the reveille brought them up all standing and with every trace of fatigue gone. Discipline, drill, systematic exercise and outdoor life do so much to develop man that it seems a pity that they are enforced upon him in their fullest perfection only as a preparation for going out to be shot.

While this preparation took time it was pressed with such energy that the marines had the honor to be the second fighting troops to land on French soil. The first were a small force of engineers. Ordinarily engineers are not ranked with the fighting forces, but after what was done by men of this service at Château-Thierry, where they blocked the passage of the bridge by the enemy and barred the Boche's way to Paris, no one will grudge them a place with the fighters.



Yankee Boys of the Marines and Poilus take a Lesson in Signalling.

But the marines were second, the Fifth Regiment of that corps landing in June, 1917, at St. Nazaire, near Brest. The service of this regiment was for a time mainly provost guard duty. In September the Sixth was landed and throughout the last months of the year a steady stream of marines flowed into France until the uniform of the devil-dogs was known all the way from the sea to the Vosges. By May they were in the trenches and their first baptism of fire came in that month on the Meuse, south-east of Verdun, when a shell burst in the trench killing two and wounding one of the 82nd Company, Sixth Regiment. It was an introduction to a sort of experience that became very commonplace to the marines in the next two months. For, in proportion to the number of men engaged, the losses in this corps exceeded any recorded during the war. It must be kept in mind that while the total enlistment in the Marine Corps approached sixty thousand, only about eight thousand were actually engaged in the more important battles of the war. This was due, of course, to the brief time for which the Boche held out after the United States actually took up arms. But of the marines thus engaged nearly half figured in the list of casualties. The Secretary of the Navy, in summing up the achievements of the Marine Corps after the armistice, said:

“With only 8,000 men engaged in the fiercest battles, the Marine Corps casualties numbered 69 officers and 1,531

enlisted men dead, and 78 officers and 2,435 enlisted men wounded seriously enough to be officially reported by cablegram, to which number should be added not a few whose wounds did not incapacitate them for further fighting. However, with a casualty list that numbers nearly half the original 8,000 men who entered battle the official reports account for only 57 United States marines who have been captured by the enemy. This includes those who were wounded far in advance of their lines and who fell into the hands of Germans while unable to resist."

It was in the last weeks of May, 1918, that the first opportunity for great service came to the United States marines. There had been no gloomier period during the whole war for the Allies. At a time when the Boches might fairly have been expected to show signs of complete exhaustion and hopelessness they had suddenly burst forth with a new and menacing advance. March 21st, Hindenburg had launched his great drive in Picardy which had progressed to a point which made the world believe that the Channel ports were threatened and that England itself was in danger of invasion. Checked at last on this line, and with the aid of American troops at Cantigny, the Hun turned his attention to what he thought was another weak point in the Allied line. This time he struck northwest of Rheims—struck suddenly and savagely at a point where the French line had been weakened by sending aid to Picardy. The drive began on May 27th and for a time seemed irresistible. The monstrous force of Boches, 400,000 at least, with

tanks, machine guns, death-dropping aircraft, heavy and light artillery, flame throwers and gas projectors rolled over and through the French lines and on toward Paris at a rate of six or eight miles a day—and the Capital of the World was but forty-four miles away. The Metz-to-Paris road was the immediate objective and it seemed that nothing could stop the triumphant advance of the Germans toward it.

But in their path lay the River Marne—that stream that once before had helped the French under the immortal Joffre to beat back their foe and save their adored city. If rivers could be canonized as individuals are, surely the Marne is entitled to sainthood along with Joan of Arc.

This time the enemy thought to cross the river at Château-Thierry, a little French town built astride of the stream which here was crossed by two stone bridges. In the spring swollen with the floods the Marne is a swiftly flowing torrent which may well bar the passage of an army. The town is constructed solidly of stone and brick, like most French towns, and the streets are closely built up to the very water's edge. The Germans carried the main city, on the northern bank of the river in their first rush, driving the French before them through the narrow winding streets and across the bridges. Speedily the enemy brought light artillery and machine guns into position, covering the bridge-heads so that he might throw his

infantry across. Once across, the way to Paris lay open.

It was at this moment that the Americans threw themselves into the breach and saved France's imperial city. But it was not to the Marine Corps that the glory of the first defense of Château-Thierry fell, although for a long time it was thought that they were the force that held the bridge-head. They were indeed in the battle of Château-Thierry but in the outskirts of the town. The rough check administered to the foe at the bridges was due to the fighting quality of a machine-gun battalion of the Third Division, which had been kept waiting for orders that never came, somewhere about one hundred kilometers in the rear of the French front. When the Germans swooped down upon the little town, filling all the roads with a torrent of men and sweeping down upon the bridges in an apparently resistless tide, the cry went up from the French for aid. It reached the ears of those in command of this little body of Americans. All unused to battle they were loaded into lorries in the dead of night and for hours sped along the black roads steering only toward the sound of the guns. As the sun rose they came to the scarred and ruined outskirts of the little city. None of them had ever faced fire before, and the deep boom of the heavy guns, the shells bursting in the streets about them and the steady rattle of the machine guns gave them a terrifying foretaste of what they had to encounter. But they brought all the dash and courage of young

America to the fight. Leaping from their auto-trucks, stiff and cramped with their long night's run, they limbered up their guns and plunged into the thick of the fight. They cleared the streets of the advancing Boches. They drove the foe away from the bridges and enabled the French sappers to destroy them with explosives. They mowed down the enemy on the broad esplanade that skirts the river, and in the little narrow streets from the walls of which the bullets ricocheted with deadly effect. They captured many of the foe and a number of machine guns, although not one of their own number fell prisoner to the Boche. But many, very many, gave up their lives, or suffered cruel wounds in the successful effort to stay the advance of the invader. A full account of this gallant action is out of place here, as despite popular misapprehension at the time, the marines took no part in it, although the commanding officer of the fighting battalion of machine gunners was a major of marines who had been assigned to them a few days before for training purposes. The marines themselves were engaged along the Marne, within the borders of Château-Thierry but not in the actual town.

This battle was fought on June 2nd. The marines had just arrived after a mad rush of seventy-two miles in motor cars, huge trucks, with seats along the sides, covered with canvas like the prairie schooners of our pioneering days, and holding forty or fifty men each. The French had these

camions by the thousands—enough it was said to transport a quarter of a million men. Brigadier-General Catlin, U.S.M.C., who accompanied that mad ride writes of it:

“We were some seventy-five miles from our destination, and many of the units made a longer trip than that. On the whole the roads were good, but the journey had its exciting incidents. Most of those camions had been working for seventy-two hours at a stretch carrying troops, and the drivers were worn out. Some of them fell asleep at their wheels and several ran off the road into the ditch.

“As to our men they were fresh and eager after their night on the hard ground. We must have seemed an extraordinary spectacle to the inhabitants of the country through which we passed, the interminable caravan of motor-lorries filled with merry men in khaki, and the long train of artillery, machine guns, supply wagons, mules and automobiles. They seemed to know what it meant for they cheered us lustily on our way.

“We skirted Paris about nine miles to the south of us, and passed through pretty villages, in many of which the people were out in full force, waving small American flags, and throwing flowers into the camions. It was more like an enormous bridal procession than a column of fighters going to face a terrible death.”

But there was plenty to enforce upon the minds of those men, speeding through the dust to the sound of distant cannon, exact knowledge of what they were about to encounter. For after some hours' riding they came upon the wreckage of battle drifting sullenly or pitifully to the rear. The

wounded were there crowded into ambulances, or hobbling painfully along the roads with some comrade's aid. The stragglers, the defeated, plodded backward away from the firing, crushed, despondent with their spirit gone, their minds resigned to the thought that after all the years of fighting, of sacrifice and of suffering the Boche was at last blasting his way through to Paris. So dense was the throng of fleeing French soldiers, with their ambulances, camp wagons and rumbling guns that it was with difficulty that the Yankees could make their way along toward the front where they alone could stay the foe's progress. It was midnight before a halt for rest was called, and then, still four miles from the actual front, the dust-caked men, weary with the weight of their sixty-pound packs, threw themselves down under the open sky, with the sound of the near-by guns roaring in their ears and sought such rest as they might find.

The marines at this time, in common with the rest of the American army in that sector, were under command of French general officers. There had been much confusion of orders, owing to the demoralization of the French command, and all night and until noon of the next day the battalions came straggling up into line. At last the greater part of the Fifth and Sixth regiments were up, and the men began to get restive for participation in the fight which they could hear going on three miles or more in advance of them. General Harbord, in command, went to the French headquarters to urge

that his men be sent in. The French commanders were doubtful. They needed help badly enough, for their advance lines were being driven in, and where they held they were exhausted by long fighting and had no reserves to oppose to the seemingly inexhaustible flood of the Huns. But they did not know the quality of these Americans who had never been in battle, and who were but poorly supplied with such necessities of war as tanks, gas shells and flame projectors. For a moment they hesitated. General Harbord was insistent.

“Let us fight in our own way,” he said, “and I’ll promise that we will stop them.”

Assent was given. Freed from further control by the French Harbord ordered his men forward, and the battle of Belleau Wood, which began then, was fought by Americans in an American fashion, and to an American—which is to say to a victorious—conclusion.

The first position taken by the marines was about half a mile back of the front held desperately by the French. They were told to dig in and get ready for a desperate defense, for it was plain that the troops on the front line were outnumbered, exhausted and must soon fall back. The Germans, with their aircraft, were picking out weak spots in the French line and then hurling powerful columns against that point. Once it was carried they would select another target and concentrate their attack there. By persistently practicing these tactics they had been advancing six or seven

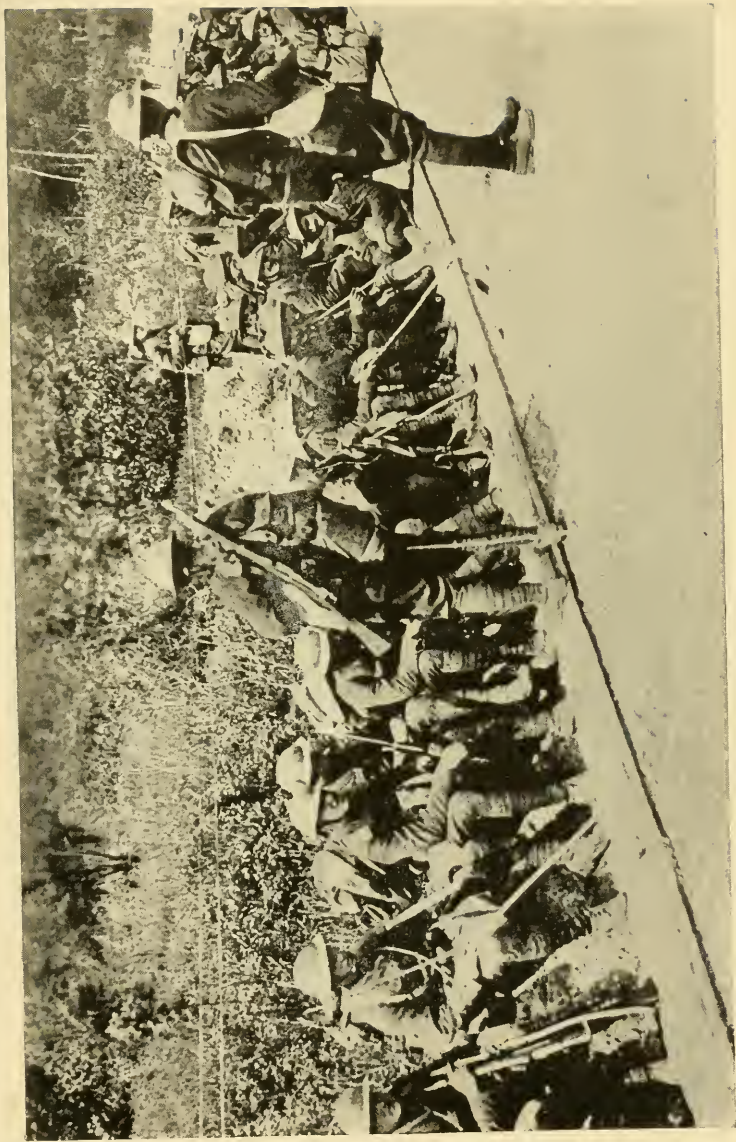
miles a day, and Paris was less than forty-five miles to the rear.

The American line, as held by the marines, was about four miles long, extending from Mares Farm, past Belleau Wood. Shallow trenches and rifle pits hastily dug furnished all the protection available. Such as it was it was constructed at night, under a light fire from the enemy who did not seem aware of the nature of the new troops that were being brought into action.

In the morning the marines awoke to the fact that a supreme test awaited them. There was at first no attack upon their lines but they could hear the fierce fire in their front, and the rapidly increasing number of French stragglers passing through their lines to the rear showed that those gallant fellows were at last worn to the breaking point. Everybody knew that the Americans' turn would come next, and sure enough the attack was launched, through a field of wheat still green in the ear, at about five o'clock in the afternoon. The assault fell first upon a French line which was in advance of the Americans, and in full view of our men. They met it gallantly enough at first, but the Germans kept coming on in increasing numbers, in column ranks, steadily, doggedly, pressing forward through the wheat up to their waists. The retreating French passed through our lines, and then our men breasted the Boche advance. Our marines may have been new to the field of battle but they were no strangers to scientific marksman-

ship. For months they had been drilled to the end that they might not throw away their shots in time of need, and now with rifle, machine gun and howitzer loaded with shrapnel they poured in a murderous fire. The orderly lines of Germans advancing through the grain fell in a bloody harvest. The poppies that blazed in the field were not redder than the splotches of blood where the flying missiles did their deadliest work in the crowded ranks. Thrown for a moment into confusion, the Germans halted, reformed and came on again. Nobody ever in this war accused the Germans of lack of gallantry in the charge. But this time the obstacle was too strong for them. Three times they reformed, and thrice their lines were cut into pieces. The dark brought merciful excuse for abandoning an assault which it was plain could never be pressed to success. They sought refuge in the woods which thereupon the marines shelled deliberately and effectively. The Hun was whipped in his first brush with American soldiers.

All that night our lines were disarranged by French soldiers straggling to the rear. Perhaps it was because they had seen the ability of the new-come Americans to handle the foe that had been pounding them so mercilessly that put an end to the determination with which they had thus far held their ground. Perhaps had we not been there they would have recognized the need for the continuance of their own efforts and still bent doggedly to their defense. No one familiar with the



As They Looked on Their Way to Chateau-Thierry, Where They Stopped
the German Rush on Paris

history of the war will question for a moment the unfailing gallantry of the French soldiers in all emergencies, and particularly the desperate determination with which he blocked with his bleeding body the path to Paris. But here at Belleau Wood the arrival of sorely needed help was coincident with his own utter exhaustion, and accordingly the weary poilu retired and left the subsequent repulse of the Boche to his American allies.

In that first day's fighting our men had suffered for lack of food. There had been confusion on the roads, and in the orders issued. The food kitchens had not come up, and the men were limited to such scraps of rations as remained in their haversacks. But next day came up first a train of motor trucks with an ample supply of cold rations. The men still hungered for something hot, and late in the afternoon amid joyous cheers the mule train with the rolling kitchens put in an appearance. The mules—one of America's most prized contributions to the machinery of all wars—had been driven at a gallop fifty-five miles in twenty-two hours. With their arrival a hot meal went forward to all the men and they gulped their coffee and slept contentedly to await a hot fight on the morrow.

The story of the first day's fighting and the German repulse was told with singular vividness in a personal letter from Major Frank E. Evans to Major-General George Barnett, which is published in full in General Catlin's book, "With the Help of God and a Few Marines." I quote in part:

"The Germans . . . were driving at Hill 165 from the N. and N. N. E. and they came out on a wonderfully clear day, in two columns across a wheat field. From our distance it looked flat and green as a baseball field set between a row of woods on the farther side, and woods and a ravine on the near side. We could see the two thin brown columns advancing in perfect order until two-thirds of the columns, we judged, were in view. The rifle and machine fire were incessant and overhead the shrapnel were bursting. Then the shrapnel came on the target at each shot. It broke just over, and just ahead of these columns and then the next burst sprayed over the very green in which we could see the columns moving. It seemed for all the world that the green fields had burst out in patches of white daisies where we could see those columns doggedly moving. And it did it again and again, no barrage but with the skill and accuracy of a cat playing with two brown mice that she could reach and mutilate at will and without any hurry. The white patches would roll away and we could see that some of the columns were still there, slowed up, and it seemed perfect uicide for them to try.

"You could not begrudge a tribute to their pluck at that. Then under that deadly fire and the barrage of rifle and machine-gun fire the Boche stopped. It was too much for any men. They buried in, or broke to the cover of the woods and you could follow them by the ripples of the green wheat as they raced for cover. The Fifth bore the brunt of it, and on our left the men raked the woods and ravines to stop the Boche at his favorite trick of infiltrating through. An aeroplane was overhead checking up our artillery fire, and when the shrapnel lay down on those columns just as an elephant would lie down on a

ton of hay, the French aviator signaled back to our lines 'Bravo!' The French, who were in support of the Fifth and one time thrown into the line, could not, and cannot today, grasp the rifle fire of the men. That men should fire deliberately and use their sights, and adjust their range was beyond their experience. The rifle fire certainly figured heavily in the toll we took, and it must have had a telling effect on the morale of the Boche, for it was something they had not counted on. As a matter of fact after pushing back the weakened French and then running up against a stone-wall defense, they were literally up in the air and more than stopped. We found that out later from prisoners, for the Germans never knew we were in the front line when they made that attack. They were absolutely mystified at the manner in which the defense had stiffened up until they found that our troops were in line.

"The next day Wise's outfit pulled a spectacular stunt in broad daylight. They spotted a machine gun out in front, called for a barrage, swept out behind it, killed or wounded every man in the crew, and disabled the gun. They got back O. K. and then the Boche launched a counter-attack that was smashed up. For the next few days we were busy pushing out small posts to locate the enemy and to reoccupy such strong points as were beyond the main line assigned us. . . . It was just 9:45 when word came in that Bouresches had been taken by Robertson's platoon of the 96th, or rather the twenty odd men of his platoon who had managed to break through a heavy machine-gun barrage and enter the town. One of Sibley's companies had been assigned the town, with Holcomb's battalion to establish the line from there to where the 23rd's left flank lay. It had been unable to advance and at the same time keep in touch on its left, as ordered. Duncan,

however, hearing that this company was 200 yards in advance (an error) raced ahead with his 96th company and was met by a terrific machine-gun barrage from two sides of, and from Bouresches. As Robertson told me he had managed to get part of his platoon through the barrage and looking back, saw Duncan and the rest of the company charging through the barrage 'go down like flies.' Robertson had one half the line and Duncan one half. Robertson blew his whistle just before this to bring up all of his half of the line, and missed Lieutenant Bowling. He passed the word 'Where is Johnny?' and saw Bowling get up, white with pain, and go stumbling ahead with a bullet in his shoulder. Duncan, the last he saw of him, before he was mowed down, had a pipe in his mouth and was carrying a stick. Dental Surgeon Osborne picked Duncan up and with a hospital corps man had just gained some shelter when a shell wiped all three out."

When the next day dawned all the French troops had been withdrawn from the sector held by the marines. Though not long—it extended for about four miles—it was a wide enough gate for any army to pass through, and it was the task of the devil-dogs to see that none should pass.

The Germans had evidently been surprised at the new resistance they had encountered, for they now suspended operations to bring up more men and guns. But that was a game at which two could play, and the Americans improved their positions and brought to the aid of the marines three regiments of United States artillery—all by the way operating French guns as we had not enough of

our own. During the third and fourth of the month the Germans pounded away at our lines with artillery of every grade using shrapnel in such quantities that it could be scooped up by the shovelful in the streets of the town, and gas, which was a novelty to our men, and one with which they could readily have dispensed.

It was an American navy officer, Admiral Faragut of glorious memory, who said that the best defense against an enemy was the rapid fire of your own guns. Now lined up along the dark and sullen front of Belleau Wood our men waited two days for the Germans to come out. As they did not come the marines went in.

Belleau Wood is not a large forest. The front toward the American lines extended for about a mile. The trees were about five or six inches in diameter, and so thickly set that it was impossible to see more than fifteen or twenty feet ahead, except where the shells had cut away. Woods in France are not permitted to grow wild as with us, but are subjected to the constant care of the forester who clears out the underbrush, and the trees that are ready for timbering, replacing the latter with new plantations. Accordingly there was but little undergrowth in this wood, and that mainly of vegetation that had sprung up during the war. This however gave ample shelter and concealment to the machine guns, which our men soon found awaited their coming in murderous numbers. The ground was high and rocky, and hid many gullies

and crags. Before entering the thicket it was virtually impossible for our men to tell what they might encounter.

Into that tangled thicket, knowing little and caring less what form of danger they might there encounter, the marines rushed. For four steady days they waged there a desperate conflict against Huns well equipped with machine guns, hidden in the underbrush, fortified behind outcropping ledges of limestone, or sheltered in some deep gully. No advance of a hundred feet could be made with any certainty that the new position would not be taken in the rear by some enemy gun crew left behind in the rush. General Harbord had asked for an opportunity for the American troops to fight in their own way, and that way, now that it was being followed, proved to be the one dating back to the time of Washington at Fort Duquesne. Every American schoolboy knows the story of how, when the Indians had thrown General Braddock's army of British veterans into confusion and rout, Washington took command and with his band of trained woodsmen, fighting after the fashion of the pioneer, behind trees and rocks and giving no heed to formal military formations, snatched victory from the very jaws of defeat. So here in the woods of France, almost one hundred and fifty years later, the American fighters went in, every one for himself and with but one general idea to get at the enemy and drive him from his hiding-place. But before they took up the fight in the wood itself the marines

had to do just what they had kept the Boche from doing earlier. It was their turn to charge through the field of wheat, waist-deep in the waving grain, and in the face of a pelting fire from the enemy machine guns hidden in the wood. But where the Germans had failed our men succeeded. "At five o'clock to the dot," writes Floyd Gibbons, an eye-witness of all this fighting until he himself fell wounded, "the marines moved out from the woods in perfect order and started across the wheat fields in four long waves. It was a beautiful sight, these men of ours going across those flat fields toward those tree clusters from which the Germans poured a murderous machine-gun fire.

"The woods were impregnated with nests of machine guns but our advance proved irresistible. Many of our men fell but those that survived pushed on through the woods, bayoneting right and left and firing as they charged. So sweeping was the advance that in some places small isolated units of our men found themselves with Germans both before and behind them.

"The enemy put up a stubborn resistance on the left and it was not until later in the evening that this part of the line reached the northeast edge of the woods after it had completely surrounded a most populous machine-gun nest which was located on a rocky hill."

To make his way through the wood the marine thrust himself through the thickets, climbed the rocky ledges, flung himself headlong into the caves,

and beat down the Boches in a battle in which there were significantly few prisoners taken. Private W. H. Smith, of the marines, told the story of the fighting as he saw it thus:

"At four A.M. we went over or rather charged forward, since there were no trenches to speak of and the fighting was all in the open or in the woods.

"There wasn't a bit of hesitation from any man. All went forward in an even line. You had not heart for fear at all. Fight—fight and get the Germans was your only thought. Personal danger didn't concern you in the least and you didn't care.

"There were about sixty of us who got ahead of the rest of the company. We just couldn't stop despite the orders of our leaders. We reached the edge of the small wooded area and there encountered some of the Hun infantry.

"Then it became a matter of shooting at mere human targets. We fixed our rifle sights at 300 yards and aiming through the peep kept picking off the Germans. And a man went down at nearly every shot.

"But the Germans soon detected us and we became the objects of their heavy fire. We received emphatic orders at this time to come back and made the half mile through the woods without hardly losing a man on the way.

"German machine guns were everywhere. In the trees and in small ground holes. And camouflaged at other places so that they couldn't be spotted.

"We stayed for the most part in one-man pits that had been dug and which gave us just a little protection.

"We saw one German a short distance before us, who had two dead ones lying across him. He was in a sitting posture and was shouting 'Kamerad, Kamerad.' We soon

learned the reason. He was serving as a lure and wanted a group of marines to come to his rescue so that the kind-hearted Americans would be in direct line of fire from machine guns that were in readiness.

"Now isn't that a dirty trick? Say, it made me sore. Before I knew what I was doing and before I realized that every one was shouting at me to stay back I bobbed up out of my hole and with bayonet ready beat it out and got that Kamerad bird. It seemed but a minute or so before I was back. But, believe me, there were some bullets whizzing around. They came so close at times I could almost feel their touch. My pack was shot up pretty much but they didn't get me.

"After that I thought I was bullet proof, and didn't care a damn for all the Germans and their machine guns.

"Soon we charged forward again. I saw one Dutchman stick his head out of a hole and then duck. I ran to the hole. The next time his head came up it was good-night Fritz.

"Every blamed tree must have had a machine gunner. As soon as we spied him we'd drop down and pick them off with our rifles. Potting the Germans became great sport. Even the officers would seize rifles from wounded marines and go to it."

The Secretary of the Navy, departing from the official custom of a colorless account of the operations of his forces, wrote an enthusiastic report of the gallant deeds of the Marine Corps, the part of which relating to the battle of Belleau Wood may well be quoted in full:

"In Belleau Wood the fighting had been literally from tree to tree, stronghold to stronghold; and it was a fight

which must last for weeks before its accomplishment in victory. Belleau Wood was a jungle, its every rocky formation containing a German machine-gun nest, almost impossible to reach by artillery or grenade fire. There was only one way to wipe out these nests—by the bayonet. And by this method were they wiped out, for United States Marines, bare chested, shouting their battle cry of ‘E-e-e-y-a-a-h-h-h YIP,’ charged straight into the murderous fire from those guns, and won.

“Out of the number that charged in more than one instance only one would reach the stronghold. There with his bayonet as his only weapon he would either kill or capture the defenders of the nest, and then, swinging the gun about in its position, turn it against the remaining German positions in the forest. Such was the character of the fighting in Belleau Wood; fighting which continued until July 6, when, after a short relief, the invincible Americans finally were taken back to the rest billets for recuperation.

“In all the history of the Marine Corps there is no such battle as that one in Belleau Wood. Fighting day and night, without relief, without sleep, often without water, and for days without hot rations, the marines met and defeated the best divisions that Germany could throw into the line. The heroism and doggedness of that battle are unparalleled. Time after time, officers seeing their lines cut to pieces, seeing their men so dog-tired that they even fell asleep under shell-fire, hearing their wounded calling for the water they were unable to supply, seeing men fight on after they had been wounded and until they became unconscious, time after time officers seeing these things, believing that the very limit of human endurance had been reached, would send back messages to their post command that their men were exhausted. But in answer to this would come

back the word that the line must hold, and, if possible, those lines must attack. And the lines obeyed. Without water, without food, without rest they went forward—and forward every time to victory. In more than one case companies lost every officer, leaving a sergeant and sometimes a corporal to command, and the advance went forward—and forward every time to victory.

“After thirteen days of this inferno of fire a captured German officer told with his dying breath of a fresh division of Germans that was about to be thrown into the battle to attempt to wrest from the marines that part of the wood they had gained. The marines, who for days had been fighting only on their sheer nerve, who had been worn out from nights of sleeplessness, from lack of rations, from terrific shell and machine-gun fire, straightened their lines and prepared for the attack. It came—as the dying German officer had predicted.

“At two o’clock on the morning of June 13th it was launched by the Germans along the whole front. Without regard to men the enemy hurled his forces against Bouresches and the Bois de Belleau and sought to win back what had been taken from Germany by the Americans. The orders were that these positions must be taken at all costs; that the utmost losses in men must be endured that the Bois de Belleau and Bouresches might fall again into German hands. But the depleted lines of the marines held; the men who had fought on their nerve alone for days once more showed the mettle of which they were made. With their backs to the trees and boulders of the Bois de Belleau, with their sole shelter the scattered ruins of Bouresches, the thinning lines of the marines repelled the attack and crashed back the new division which had sought to wrest the position from them.

"And so it went. Day after day, night after night, while time after time messages like the following traveled to the post command:

"'Losses heavy. Difficult to get runners through. Some have never returned. Morale excellent but troops about all in. Men exhausted.'

"Exhausted but holding on. And they continued to hold on in spite of every difficulty. Advancing their lines slowly day by day, the marines finally prepared their positions to such an extent that the last rush for the possession of the wood could be made. Then, on June 24th, following a tremendous barrage the struggle began.

"The barrage literally tore the woods to pieces, but even its immensity could not wipe out all the nests that remained, the emplacements that were behind every clump of bushes, every jagged rough group of bowlders. But those that remained were wiped out by the American method of the rush and the bayonet, and in the days that followed every foot of Belleau Wood was cleared of the enemy and held by the frayed lines of the Americans."

It must be remembered that Belleau Wood was in no respect what we in 'America would call a forest. Rather was it what we would describe as a "patch of woods." It was perhaps a mile square, and surrounded by cultivated fields. But until it was cleared out and held the American lines could not advance without leaving it like a great pest hole in their rear. It had therefore to be taken, and taken it was.

Now, in France the points of hardest resistance were woods and villages. Belleau Wood had been

overcome, but in its immediate vicinity, to the east, was the village of Bouresches from which it was equally necessary to drive the foe. There were probably three or four hundred Germans in the village, well provided with machine guns. Like all French towns this was built of heavy rubble masonry, and each house was in effect a small fort, impervious to mere rifle fire. The defenders had mounted their guns at street corners, in the deeply embrasured windows, behind walls and even on the roofs.

Two companies of marines from Sibley's and Holcomb's battalions were ordered to drive out the enemy. To reach their objective they had first to charge across a field of grain, as had their fellows attacking Belleau Wood. They knew the fighting would be hand to hand, and the first two ranks of the assailants were supplied with hand grenades and automatic pistols; the two following with rifles and bayonets. A brief bombardment cleared the way in part for the attack.

The fire from the town was savage. Captain Duncan leading one company—there were but two companies in the attacking force—was shot down as he was marching doggedly forward pipe in mouth. More men fell than could continue the advance. Before they reached the first streets of the village so many had fallen that they were enormously outnumbered by the defenders. Lieutenant Robertson, who took command after Duncan's fall had barely twenty men when he came to grips with the Boches,

but those twenty were devil-dogs and they won. It was fierce hand to hand fighting in the narrow streets, the hallways and even the cellars of the French houses. In the midst of it all Robertson discovered that he had but twenty effective men left. He sent back for reinforcements but waited not one minute for them to come up. With his twenty he started in to clean up the town. That was a desperate and bloody task. The cellars were full of Boches, some of whom fought to the death, while others cowering in terror had fairly to be dragged out. A grenade or two in a crowded cellar does terrible execution, and the marines had little time nor much inclination to be overgentle with the foe. It was an Australian who remarked that the Americans were good soldiers but inclined to be rough, and there was no field on which the slogan "Treat 'em rough" was more literally followed than at Bouresches. It is proper to note, however, that the report, current at the time, that the marines had been ordered to take no prisoners was emphatically and officially denied. Considerations of humanity aside such a command would have been the poorest policy, for nothing makes men fight more desperately than the knowledge that they are doomed to certain death, and it was the capture of the village more than the slaughter of Germans that was the American objective. It was not, however, a moment when the niceties of human intercourse were observed. Floyd Gibbons tells a story of an aristocratic German officer, very

precise as to uniform, wearing a monocle and an air of wounded dignity, whom he saw taken prisoner in the course of the fight. Gibbons asked him his opinion of the fighting qualities of the American soldier. The captive, who had been in the United States and spoke English, was much aggrieved. His dignity had been affronted.

"I was in a dugout with forty German wounded in the cellar under the Beaurepaire farm when the terrible bombardment broke out," he said. "I presume my gallant comrades defending the position died at their posts, because soon the barrage lifted and I walked across the cellar to the bottom of the stairs and looked up.

"There in the little patch of white light on the level of the ground above me, I saw the first American soldier I have seen in the war. But he did not impress me much as a soldier. I did not like his carriage or his bearing.

"He wore his helmet far back on his head. And he did not have his coat on. His collar was not buttoned, it was rolled back and his throat was bare. And he had a grenade in his hand.

"Just then he looked down the stairs and saw me—saw me standing there—saw me a major—and shouted roughly, 'Come out of there you big Dutch stiff or I'll spill a basketful of these on you.'"

While the men under Robertson were busy with grenades and bayonets clearing up the town, reinforcements under Captain Zane, together with a

company of engineers, came to their aid. They knew well enough that it was not enough to take the position; they had to hold it. The enemy would be back with his counter-attack before long, and the marines discovered that they were running out of ammunition. Lieutenant Moore, a Princeton athlete, and Sergeant John Quick started out to supply the need.

Quick merits a word of biography here for he was one of the veterans of the corps—a marine of thirty years' standing. For what he did at Bouresches he got a medal of honor, but he had earned it long before. In Cuba, during our war with Spain Stephen Crane, the author of "The Red Badge of Courage" encountered Quick at Siboney, who was then in calm performance of his duty as a marine. With a handkerchief tied to a walking-stick he was wig-wagging a message to the *Dolphin*.

"I watched his face," said Crane, "and it was serene as that of a man sitting in his own library, the embodiment of tranquillity and absorption in the work at hand. We gave him sole possession of that part of the ridge, for this marine, with his back turned to the woods was wig-wagging his message to the *Dolphin* while all Spain was shooting at him. But with bullets singing all around he showed not a single trace of nervousness or haste. I saw him betray only one sign of emotion. That was when an overhead branch of a tree, cut by a Mauser bullet, had sagged downward. His flag had been caught by the swaying limb and he looked

over his shoulder to see what held it. Then he gave the flag an impatient jerk. He looked annoyed."

At Bouresches the feat for which Sergeant Quick won his Distinguished Service Cross was taking a truck load of ammunition to the advance party of marines who were sorely in need of such succor. The road over which the truck had to travel was as bright as day with the German flares, and so torn up with shell holes that the truck rolled and careened like a ship in a typhoon as the marines urged it along through the pelting hail of shell and shrapnel. As they approached the town they drove straight into the direct fire of spouting machine guns. But they pulled through and their comrades got their needed ammunition. With it they proceeded to clean up the town.

Another picturesque figure among the marines was Sergeant Dan Daly whose service dated back to 1899. He helped defend the compound of the American legation at Peking during the Boxer Rebellion, and once held a bastion single-handed under fire all night. For this he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. In Haiti, sixteen years later, he led a squad of marines against a native fort, captured and burnt it. For this he received a second medal. When the marines landed at Vera Cruz just before our entrance upon the World War he was again a leader, and again won a medal. In France he fought as he had fought in Asia and the Caribbean. The place of battle meant little to him. In Belleau Wood he took a machine

gun single-handed, and in sending him a distinguished Service Cross General Pershing summed up his deeds of gallantry thus:

“Sergeant Daly repeatedly performed deeds of heroism and great service on June 5, 1918. At the risk of his life he extinguished a fire in an ammunition dump in Lucy-le-Bocage. On June 7, 1918, while his position was under violent bombardment he visited all the gun crews of his company, then posted over a wide portion of the front, to cheer his men. On June 10, 1918, he attempted an enemy machine-gun emplacement unassisted, and captured it by means of hand grenades and his automatic pistol. On the same day, during the German attack on Bouresches, he brought in wounded under fire.”

Daly and Quick were but two of the gallant men who performed deeds of reckless daring during those days in Belleau Wood and around Bouresches.

In the record of a war which included such colossal struggles as the battle of the Marne or the prolonged assaults upon Verdun, Belleau Wood does not bulk big in respect to either the number of troops engaged or the number of casualties. But in importance it ranks high. For there, and in the Allied action at Château-Thierry the last German drive on Paris was halted. Whether it was that thin line of marines that put the final seal of discouragement upon the Boche, or whether he had already shot his final bolt, cannot be determined with certainty. But the fact exists that after that day at Belleau Wood the Boche advanced not an-

other step. The rest of his career was in retreat. M. Clemenceau, the "Tiger" of France, has said that the marines saved Paris. The Parisians long said so.

The German forces which opposed our men there outnumbered the Americans four to one, and had the advantage of a fortified position. But our men drove them from their ground, took more than 100 guns of every caliber, and more than 1,400 prisoners. What the French High Command thought of the American achievement is perhaps best indicated by this formal order:

With Army Staff

6930/2

Army HQ., June 30th, 1918.

ORDER

In view of the brilliant conduct of the 4th Brigade of the 2nd U. S. Division, which in a spirited fight took Bouresches and the important strong point of Belleau Wood, stubbornly defended by a large enemy force, the General commanding the VIth Army orders that henceforth in all official papers the Bois de Belleau shall be named "Bois de la Brigade de Marine."

Division General Degoutte,

Commanding VIth Army.

(Signed) DEGOUTTE.

For a time the men of the Marine Corps enjoyed the quiet of rest camps. But they had proved their mettle too well for the general commanders charged with the duty of pressing the war to a victorious conclusion to leave them long inactive. July 18th

they went into action again in the vicinity of Soissons, near Tigny and Vierzy. This was a bigger battle than that at Belleau Wood, but the marines were this time not the whole show, as the fight was participated in by the whole First and Second divisions of the American army with the French Moroccan Corps sandwiched in between them. At the same time the leather-necks had ample opportunity to show their mettle. Their hike to the field of battle was itself no mean achievement—a whole night's ride on motor lorries, followed by a day of hard marching, a brief rest and a night of pushing forward on foot to the sound of the guns. The Fifth regiment arrived first, delivered a surprise attack in the fall of a heavy machine-gun fire, and had the enemy on the run when the Second came up. Between the two of them they not only took the position but captured 7,000 prisoners and more than 400 pieces of artillery. Floyd Gibbons, who had partly recovered from his wounds received at Belleau Wood, was the only correspondent on the ground at this battle and from his account in the *Chicago Tribune* I quote some descriptive passages:

“That night the weather for once played into the Allies' hands. It began to thunder, the lightning came and the skies spit fire. The rain came down like the spray of machine guns.

“While the rain poured down, from every avenue came two long lines of steel trucks, ammunition wagons, and every sort of conveyance. On either side of the road, marching in single file, were American marines, infantry

and others. All were moving forward. French cavalry with their lances were winding in and out of the trees. Little French tanks, green, yellow, brown and blue, moved forward like monsters in the dark, guided by fellows walking in the front with Turkish towels wrapped around their shoulders showing faintly white in the darkness. All moved through the village of Villers Cotterets.

"It was 4:35. It would have been hell if the Germans had found out that there were 70,000 men in the forest. Poisonous gases would have knocked out thousands of them, the place would have been filled with shrapnel—and that would have been the end of that movement.

"The marines had plainly the furthest distance to move to get into line, and they had to hurry to get there by the zero hour. Yet—would you believe it—after those poor fellows had been on the march all day long, they moved forward on the double in order to get there on time.

"The marching was awful. I talked with one chap who was sitting down to rest. When I asked him what was the matter he said his feet were all in, and he could not run any farther.

"‘I enlisted in the marines to kill Germans,’ he said, ‘but I did not think we had to run them to death. I recommend that they give us lassoes.’”

The fighting that followed was largely hand to hand. A sergeant of marines, A. R. M. Ganoë, writing to a Pittsburg paper, gave many picturesque descriptions of its character. One incident is worth repeating:

"The first time our battalion went over the top the leading wave entered the woods without seeing a German.

About one hundred yards in the woods they sighted the Boche. With a blood-freezing war-whoop they charged. Nothing on earth but concentrated cross fire by cool machine gunners could have stopped them. And the imperial German nerve, being nothing to brag of in the first place, had been worn ragged by our infantry. That war-whoop was the straw that broke their nerve. The crews stood by their guns. The other Germans ran. They didn't seem to care much about direction. Some ran into our bayonets, some ran away from them, some didn't have nerve enough to haul themselves free of their dugouts. But it made no difference. The result was the same. They're there yet. One German captain jumped up from his dugout, wild-eyed and dishevelled.

“‘What in Gott's name iss it?’ he shouted in good English. ‘Are these devils we face drunk or bloodthirsty savages?’ Then he threw a hand grenade point-blank at a lieutenant. The ‘loot’ ducked and leveled his automatic at the same time, so the captain's question is still unanswered.”

Again a brief rest for the marines, about the middle of September, they were called to aid in Pershing's successful attempt to reduce the St. Mihiel salient. That done they retired again to be recalled for operations in the Champagne district by which Rheims was freed from the German grip. The end of the war was now fairly in sight and General Pershing was launched on that drive toward Sedan which threatened the German communications and which, nevertheless, the enemy was at no time able to check. Though the enemy

massed his best troops at the point of danger his resistance became first an orderly retreat, then a flight. The marines were in the very van of the pursuers when on the 11th of November the war was ended by the armistice.

The part taken in this historic conflict by the United States Marine Corps reflects new luster upon that organization whose annals were already glorious enough. In all 21,323 enlisted men, and 540 officers were sent to France. Not all these, less than half indeed, saw actual action. But those who reached battle line did some of the most heroic fighting of the war.

CHAPTER X

The end of the war.—Naval conditions of the armistice.—The surrender at Scapa Flow.—Surrender of the German destroyers.—Diary of a defeated German.—Scuttling the German fleet.—Our naval losses in the war.—Lessons of the conflict.

IT was on the 11th of November, 1918, at 11 o'clock A.M.—eleventh month, eleventh day, eleventh hour the newspapers pointed out—that the World War was brought to an end by the signing of the armistice at General Foch's headquarters at La Capelle. German delegates had been brought, blindfolded, through the Allied lines the night before, for requests from Germany for a cessation of hostilities during the peace negotiations had been sternly refused. Foch had the enemy on the run and was in no mood to yield any shred of his advantage. It was an army peace, of course, and in the negotiations the navy had no share, although Vice Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, First Lord of the British Admiralty, and Vice Admiral William S. Sims were present.

Briefly summarized the conditions of the armistice affecting naval conditions were as follows:

The immediate surrender to the Allies and the United States of all German submarines, including mine-layers.

The internment and disarmament of practically all the German surface men-of-war to await the action of the peace conference and their final disposition by treaty.

All German aircraft to be concentrated and demobilized at specified places.

Indication to the Allies and the United States of the location of all mines that the seas might be cleared of mine-fields.

Opening of the Baltic to all nations.

Evacuation of all Belgian ports and surrender of all vessels of every class therein.

The announcement by the Germans to the world of the abandonment of submarine warfare, and the conclusion of the war upon the sea.

In accordance with these terms of the armistice the chill and desolate harbor of Scapa Flow in the Orkneys was fixed as the place of internment for the German surface fleet. The surrender was ordered for November 20, 1918. Before the main fleet was turned over to the combined naval forces of England, France and the United States the first twenty submarines were delivered to Rear Admiral Tyrwhitt off Harwich at sunrise on that day. The British force that received the surrender of these sinister underwater boats consisted of five light cruisers and twenty destroyers. A big observation balloon hung over the fleet and as the ceremony took place at early dawn the picturesqueness of the occasion was added to by the sun rising in the east, while a great white moon still shone in the west.

No chances were taken on the British vessels. The paravanes were rigged out-board to divert any mines that might be drifting in the neighborhood. Officers and men put on their life-belts, and as the enemy appeared in the offing the gun crews went to their stations as though it were a battle, not an abject surrender, for which preparations were making. No flags flew over the enemy vessels as they steamed sullenly out from their coast, but strips of bunting flying from the British flagship gave them the peremptory order to fall in line and follow the British lead. They obeyed. From every vessel of the victorious squadron sharp eyes watched the defeated foe. Once two carrier pigeons were seen to rise from the tower of a submarine, and instantly a signal was flashed forbidding any repetition of this effort to communicate with the land they had left. Off Harwich the whole fleet came to anchor. Two German light cruisers had accompanied the enemy fleet and to them the German sailors from each submarine were transferred. As the boats were thus abandoned white flags were run up on each with the German ensign below, and they were towed into the tidal basin at Harwich. The whole ceremony was conducted without any manifestation of triumph, and indeed in almost complete silence. So ended the German effort to enforce the will of the Kaiser by undersea war.

The next day near the entrance to the Firth of Forth occurred the dramatic surrender of the great fleet with which Germany had thought to contest

control of the seas with England, but which had been doomed to spend the entire period of this greatest of wars in virtual inaction. The names and tonnage of the ships surrendered were as follows:

DREADNOUGHTS

	Tons.
<i>Friedrich der Grosse</i>	24,113
<i>König Albert</i>	24,113
<i>Kaiser</i>	25,000
<i>Kronprinz Wilhelm</i>	25,000
<i>Kaiserin</i>	24,113
<i>Bayern</i>	28,000
<i>Markgraf</i>	25,293
<i>Prinzregent Luitpold</i>	24,113
<i>Grosser Kurfürst</i>	25,293

LIGHT CRUISERS

<i>Karlsruhe</i>	(?) 4,000
<i>Frankfurt</i>	5,400
<i>Emden</i>	5,400
<i>Brummer</i>	4,000
<i>Breslau</i>	4,000
<i>Köln</i>	(?) 4,500
<i>Bremen</i>	4,000

DESTROYERS

Fifty—Averaging 600 tons	30,000
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BATTLE CRUISERS

<i>Seydlitz</i>	25,000
<i>Derflinger</i>	28,000
<i>Hindenburg</i>	27,000
<i>Moltke</i>	23,000
<i>Von der Tann</i>	18,000

A correspondent of the *New York Times* who was on board the United States warship *Florida*, one of the warships of our navy which shared in the honor of receiving the surrender of the Kaiser's fleet, wrote the following graphic description of the historic event:

"In the bright sunlight this afternoon nine German battleships, five battle cruisers, and seven light cruisers steamed into the Firth of Forth and gave themselves up for internment. They were led by a tiny British cruiser, and as they passed between the long lines of British and American battleships, the very perfection of their steaming and accuracy of their handling seemed to accentuate their humiliation.

"How completely the menace which has hung like a cloud over the Allies was dissipated today is shown by the roll of vessels given up. Chief of the battleship squadron, which was commanded by Rear Admiral von Reuter, was the new *Bayern*, of 28,000 tons, and carrying eight 15-inch guns. Then came the *Grosser Kurfürst*, the *Markgraf*, and the *Kronprinz*, each of about 25,390 tons, and with ten 12-inch guns, and lastly the *Friedrich der Grosse*, *König Albert*, *Prinzregent Luitpold*, *Kaiser* and *Kaiserin*, each of approximately 24,310 tons and ten 12-inch guns.

"Commodore Tagert commanded the five battle cruisers, the *Derflinger* and *Hindenburg*, each of 26,180 tons, with eight 12-inch guns; the *Seydlitz*, 24,610 tons, with ten 11-inch guns; the *Moltke*, of 22,640 tons and the same armament, and the *Von der Tann*, of 19,100 tons and eight 11-inch guns. The light cruisers brought in today under Commodore Harder included the *Karlsruhe*, *Nurnberg*, *Köln*, *Frankfurt*, *Brummer*, *Bremen* and *Emden*. In addition there were fifty destroyers. All these are now at anchor under the guns of the Grand Fleet in British waters.

"The programme for the surrender was absolutely simple. The Germans had expressed a willingness to give themselves up, and there was nothing for them to do but to come on their last cruise across the North Sea.

"Last Monday (Nov. 18) the Germans, in accordance

with orders from Admiral Beatty, put out to sea, with magazines empty, their guns secured amidships, and only navigating and engineering crews aboard. The British and American fleets were in parade order to receive a visit from King George. On Wednesday the King, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, in the destroyer *Oak*, steamed along miles of water between the great fighting ships. He was received formally on the American flagship *New York* in the afternoon by Admirals Sims and Rodman and Captain Beach, and he met the commanding officers of the other dreadnoughts—*Florida*, *Arkansas*, *Wyoming* and *Texas*. But there were two noteworthy incidents connected with that visit. As the King stepped upon the deck of the *New York*, for the first time since the Revolution the British royal standard was broken out at the mainmast of an American warship in honor of the King of England, and before he left he made an interesting suggestion to Admiral Rodman. He said he would like to see certain British ships cross the Atlantic each year to take part in American maneuvers, and American vessels in British waters at work with the British fleet. Thus, he thought, an understanding between the two great naval forces might be perpetuated.

“Meanwhile, as the King spoke of his plans for peace, half a mile away was a reminder that the war was not yet over. As he shook hands with the American officers, out of the mists above the Forth Bridge came a long line of low gray war vessels. They paid no attention to the battleships, with their cheering crews. They paused not to salute the flag. Quietly they kept on their way. As they swung a little to northward toward the sea, another division of them slid silently up, and before these grew dim in the dusk yet another half dozen hove into sight. They were destroyers, the eyes and ears of the British fleet, and they were already

putting out to meet the Germans. Since a little before noon they had begun to get under way, and from then until well after dark division after division of them kept slipping by. As they went, every one of them was as ready for action as though the armistice had not been signed, and U-boats lurked beneath the surface of the sea.

“Admiral Beatty was taking no chances. He knew it would have been suicide for the Germans to attempt resistance at the last moment, but are there no moments when brave men may prefer death to dishonor? So, as the British and American fleets prepared to receive the surrender, they were also prepared for action. Their decks were stripped, their battle flags were hoisted, ammunition for the big guns was in the turrets, and every officer and man was ready.

“The plan was that the Germans should reach the rendezvous, sixty miles out, at eight o’clock in the morning. All but their destroyers were to form in a long column headed by the British light cruiser *Cardiff*. First came the battle cruisers, then the battleships, three cables apart, then after a gap of three miles the light cruisers at the same interval, and last, three miles astern, the destroyers in groups of five. The *Cardiff* was to regulate their movements, and get, if possible, twelve knots out of them. All their big guns were to be trained inboard. Meanwhile on either side of their course, the Grand Fleet was to stand out and meet them in two long columns. Light cruisers were to lead the van, and behind them were the battleships, and behind these again other battle cruisers and light cruisers. Two great columns, each at least twenty miles long, were thus to be formed, and between them, under constant surveillance all the way, the German ships were to sail.

“There was to be no communication between them and

the Allies. They were to be left completely alone, and had only to obey signals and take up the anchorage assigned to them.

“Long before dawn this morning the Grand Fleet got under way to go down to the appointed place. Thirty-three battleships, nine battle cruisers, five cruisers and thirty-one light cruisers were to take part in the great triumph, and it takes a long time to move a mighty fleet like that in single file. It was a wonderful sight to watch them slip away in the small hours of the morning. There was a full moon, but the sky was overcast. For over six hours the British and American ships were picking their way down the Firth and maneuvering to assume the two-column formation. From time to time through the air came signals from the Germans announcing exactly where they were and what progress they were making.

“At 8:18 o'clock the German commander reported he could not make the twelve knots required, but only ten. Everything was going well, but it was not until 9:15 that the Germans were first made out from the Grand Fleet. They were holding strictly to their course and steaming steadily ahead in excellent order, but from the northern column, at any rate looking into the sun and across the mists, they seemed very ghosts of a fighting force. They were dim and shadowy and were barely discernible against the gray sea. Above them floated a British observation balloon and a dirigible, but they made no signals and paid no attention to any one.

“After they had passed the cruiser they met the famous fifth British battle squadron which once before had come across them and left its mark upon them. They were the *Barham*, *Valiant*, *Warspite* and the *Malaya*, ships which rushed at the battle of Jutland to the rescue of the battle

cruisers. Then they were sheathed in smoke and fire; to-day they stood out in the sunlight glistening as if with silver, and gay with signaling flags—sturdy and solid-looking craft they were. Then next behind them came five tall ships from across the Atlantic, with Stars and Stripes floating proudly from each of their masts and flaunting as well from the latticework of their mainmasts. If the Germans used their glasses they must have seen their decks almost bare of figures, but their fighting tops crowded with them at their stations and their big guns ready to be swung round at a second's notice.

"To the trained sailor's eye they represented warships ready for instantaneous battle.

"'It is the proudest moment in my life,' said an American officer as he looked through the mist at the German fleet slinking into inglorious safety, and again at the line of American ships keeping perfect distance and direction as they followed the flagship *New York*.

"But even when the two powerful squadrons had gone by, the Germans had still to pass the nine battleships of the second battle squadron, Admiral Beatty's flagship, the *Queen Elizabeth*, and four ships of the first battle cruiser squadron and the *Lion*, as well as the fourth light cruiser squadron. Moreover, what the Germans saw on their starboard bow clearly enough in the sun, they knew was repeated on their other quarter, even though it was shadowed by the mists. They were steaming between two mighty fleets, which could blow them out of the water in five minutes. And it was of their own volition. This is what the ceremony of today seemed especially designed to bring out—that the surrender of the German fleet was a voluntary act on their part, and that there was no reason why they should have done it if they had not been afraid to fight.

After a time the British columns turned and accompanied their prisoners back, each separate squadron wheeling out of line and back again so as to reverse the order of the whole array without altering that of each unit. But through it all the Germans kept plodding on. No one apparently gave them orders; no one coerced them; they were self-confessed in defeat and fleeing to safety while there was yet time.

“The ceremony was almost terribly impersonal, so ostentatiously did the Grand Fleet keep its hands off its prisoners. It had been at grips with the Germans before, and now it was content to let them pass and leave them alone.

“As the Germans drew nearer their anchorage the humiliating nature of their plight must have come home still more sharply to them. As it chanced, it was necessary for the three lines of vessels to come closer together. The north and south columns of the Grand Fleet sheered in toward the German, and it seemed as though it was merely one division of a mighty fighting force.

“The German ships were still flying their battle flags. Their guns ran out stiffly from their turrets, and their low silhouettes showed how skillfully they had been designed as war machines.

“They were keeping a beautiful formation as regards distance, and there was nothing to suggest what they were, yet every mile was bringing them nearer hopeless and prolonged captivity, and all their professional skill served only to aid their enemies in putting them easily into confinement. So as they reached their anchorage in the Firth, some miles below the Forth Bridge, in obedience to orders from the British, they split up into several lines and came to a halt. There they lay, motionless and harmless, and the British

and American victors swept by, leaving them to the care of guardships. This afternoon Sir David Beatty sent to Admiral von Reuter this order:

“‘The German flag is to be hauled down at 5:57 to-day (that is, sundown). It is not to be hoisted again without permission.’

“Before many days the German ships will be moved under close guard in small detachments to that delightful winter resort, Scapa Flow, in the bleak Orkneys, where they will be able to meditate for weeks and months on what British and American seamen dared to endure to cut their claws.”

By way of contrast to the exultant note of the victor's description of the ceremonies of the surrender it is interesting to quote some portions from the diary of one of the German naval officers who was present, which were printed originally in a Berlin newspaper:

“*Sunday, Nov. 17.*—Clouds of smoke and soot lie over the war harbor. . . . It was often so during the war when the fleet was suddenly going out for some undertaking, or the enemy was reported out at sea by our aircraft, or advance patrols. But today it is quite different; the High Seas Fleet is beginning its last cruise—surrendering to the enemy. For four years I have shared victory and want with my crew, and I won't leave them in the lurch at the end. Going on board is hard. The red flag is still flying there, a sign of all that has happened in these last weeks. The crew is serious and quiet; most of them feel how great is the disgrace.

“*Monday, Nov. 19.*— . . . The undefeated German fleet

is going out to meet the enemy who anxiously avoided it for four years and says to him, 'Here take us; you have won the game only too brilliantly.' . . . I wept and I am not ashamed of it.

"*Tuesday, Nov. 20.*—Soon after noon we put to sea. Not racing ahead as before, but crawling slowly. We must save as much coal as possible. . . . No look out for submarines now and no manning of the guns. I cannot help asking myself how we have earned such an end and whether all our brave seamen are lying for nothing at the bottom of the sea?

"*Thursday, Nov. 21.*—On Wednesday morning one of our destroyers struck a mine and sunk. Many are already lying down there, and many more will follow when the mine-sweeping begins again. At 8 o'clock we are at the appointed place. The first English destroyer soon comes in sight. My heart beats furiously. If we had still our torpedoes aboard I think that the destroyer would have known it. So it is a good thing that we left every weapon behind. The destroyers surround us on every side; we are a procession of prisoners. Our large ships are convoyed in the same way by the English battleship and cruiser squadrons. The English stood at their battle stations with gas masks on. They simply could not understand that we should surrender without a blow. The English ships are freshly painted. The men are in their best clothes. Everything is arranged to impress us. Slowly we proceed to our anchoring place in the Firth of Forth. Nothing to be seen of the land; typical English fog. Airmen circle round us, playing all sorts of games. One of them who intended to make a particularly bold movement falls straight into the sea. An airship also, wabbling clumsily, feels it necessary to show us—how well built our Zeppelins are.

*“Friday, Nov. 22.—*The search commission is on board. I speak with the English officers only to say what is absolutely necessary. With me they will have no occasion to disobey their strict order not to fraternize with the Germans. Apparently they are less concerned to discover whether we really have no ammunition and weapons on board than to spy out our equipment. They have little luck in this. All the things which they would so much have liked to see and about which they constantly asked—instruments for measuring distance, electrical apparatus, and especially the ‘smoke’ apparatus—stayed behind at Wilhelmshaven. So they can only observe that we have very pretty guns. For a long time they racked their brains about certain other parts of our armament, the use of which they do not understand. ‘Unhappily’ I do not know enough English to explain. Today my English is for the most part limited to ‘yes’ and ‘no.’

*“Sunday, Nov. 24.—*The German fleet is being taken to Scapa Flow. There is no further question of our going to a neutral port. If it must be an English port I like Scapa Flow best, for up there there is at least no mob to laugh at us.”

Although not wholly pertinent to the story of the work of our navy in the war it may be noted that the Germans concluded their naval record with an act of perfidy, which may justly be described as characteristic. The terms of the treaty had been determined upon and promulgated. They compelled the reduction of the German navy to six battle-ships, six light cruisers and twelve torpedo boats. The fortifications of Heligoland must be disman-

tled—this has already been done—and the Germans were forbidden to build any torpedo boats whatever. Before this treaty was actually signed, on June 21, but while they were still bound by the terms of the armistice, the German crews in charge of the ships interned at Scapa Flow, acting upon orders from superior officers, opened the sea-cocks of most of the ships and sunk them at their moorings. It was an act in contravention of all tenets of naval honor, but it was loudly boasted of in Berlin as an evidence of the determination of German officers never to give up the ships, and to go down with colors flying. As a matter of fact the colors had been hauled down months before, and the devoted scuttlers of surrendered ships eagerly sought rescue by boats from the British ships on guard.

Thus ended, ignominiously enough, Germany's challenge to the world for supremacy upon the High Seas. How much that ambition cherished by the Kaiser had to do with bringing on the war is well worth consideration. That it greatly contributed to the English hostility to Germany long before the war was declared does not admit of doubt. No one can read the portions of this story devoted to the submarine operations without seeing that considerations of self-preservation compel Great Britain to keep her navy first on the ocean. Unable to feed the people of the British Isles on the products of their home fields she is dependent upon ocean carriage for food. Interrupt her ocean

routes and she will starve. When therefore any nation openly challenges British control of the sea she menaces the very life of the British nation. In the case of Germany this challenge came from a people who were notoriously militant and who, under the rule of an arrogant and ambitious Kaiser were a source of uneasiness to lovers of peace the world over. Under that leadership they had repulsed British overtures for the limitation of naval armaments and gave every indication of preparing for an assault upon the world.

Accordingly when that assault came Great Britain threw her strength to the side of the Allies. The ostensible reason was the violation of Belgian neutrality. But there is reason to doubt whether, had Belgium been respected by the Kaiser's armies, Great Britain could have afforded to stand by and see Germany crush western Europe and proceed with her ambition to contest the sovereignty of the seas. But that contest was settled for many a year and decade to come by the surrender at Scapa Flow.

While we are accustomed to look upon the part played by the American navy in this war as one involving endurance rather than fighting qualities, its losses nevertheless were considerable.

These tables, from the report of Secretary Daniels to President Wilson, show the number of American vessels sunk by the enemy, their tonnage and the number of lives lost:

BLUE JACKETS OF 1918

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NAVAL VESSELS

	No. of Vessels	Tonnage	Lives Lost.
From April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918:			
By submarines	14	103,583	677
By mines	5	45,356	54
By collision	15	30,794	65
Miscellaneous	14	31,128	346
Total	48	210,861	1,142

MERCHANT VESSELS

From August, 1914, to April 6, 1917:			
By submarines	15	53,671	63
By mines	5	10,770	4
By German cruiser <i>Eitel Friedrich</i>	1	3,374	0
Total	21	67,815	67
From April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918:			
By submarines	124	244,385	342
By raiders	6	4,388	0
Total	130	248,773	342
Total number of merchant vessels.....	151	315,588	409
Total number of naval vessels.....	48	210,861	1,144
Grand total	199	526,449	1,553

TROOPSHIPS

The *Antilles*, *President Lincoln* and *Covington* were the only actual troopships lost in the war by the cruiser and transport force. The *Westbridge*, a cargo carrier, reached a French port. The *Mt. Vernon* also got to port. The armored cruiser *San Diego* was destroyed by a mine laid by a submarine off the American coast.

Ships	Date	Gross Tons	Lives Lost
<i>Antilles</i>	Oct. 17, 1917 (torpedoed)	6,878	67
<i>Pres. Lincoln</i>	May 31, 1918	18,167	26
<i>Covington</i>	July 1, 1918	16,339	6
<i>Westbridge</i>	Aug. 15, 1918	5,660	4
<i>Mt. Vernon</i>	Sept. 5, 1918	18,372	36
<i>Saetia</i>	Nov. 9, 1918 Mined	2,873	0
<i>Herman Frasch</i> ..	Oct. 4, 1918 (collision)	3,803	16
(army transport)	(internal explosion)		
<i>Ophir</i>	Nov. 11, 1918	7,089	0

The war which Germany had hoped to win on the sea was finally lost by her on the land, to which she had turned again despairingly when the success of the convoy system, for which American initiative was largely responsible, ended her hope of starving England into subjection.

Military historians will point to the check administered to the final despairing German drive at Château-Thierry, and at Belleau Wood as the beginning of the end.

If so the United States navy, through its Marine Corps, was engaged in both battles and was a very efficient factor in that conclusion.

It may be urged that the threat which actually compelled the enemy's appeal for an armistice was that expressed in the advance of the American army through the Argonne, menacing Sedan, Metz and the vital communications of Hindenburg's army.

If that be conceded the navy has still a right to share in the glory for it was its great guns, mounted on railroad cars, and served by navy gunners, that had cut to pieces the enemy's railroad communications, torn up his junctions, demolished his supply bases, and were ready to open on Metz itself when the appeal for a cessation of hostilities came from the German High Command.

But more than either of these causes of German collapse was the steady, unrelenting, unescapable pressure of the blockade upon Germany. It undermined the morale of the people behind the armies,

denying them food, clothing, the necessities of life and all of its comforts. It handicapped the armies by creating a desperate scarcity of such fundamental factors in munitions and equipment as oil, rubber, cotton and copper. It compelled the Teutons to fight to the east, seeking supplies from Russia, the Balkans and even Asia Minor when victory could only be won by the concentration of their power on the Western Front.

In this blockade our navy took only a minor part. It was established by the British navy an hour after war was declared, and was maintained with inflexible determination and unfaltering purpose until after the conclusion of peace. We were a part of it after our entrance upon the war, but its work had been mainly done before we came in. Yet it is worthy of attention in this story of the part played by the United States navy because of the lessons which the effects of that blockade may teach to our advantage.

It was an American admiral who first wrote for the instruction of the world upon the influence of Sea Power upon History. Had Admiral Mahan lived to interpret the lessons of the World War he would have strengthened enormously the position to which he had already converted the thinking world. For it was sea power, more than anything else, which defeated the Teutonic powers.

And this may be said without detracting in the least degree from the devotion, the efficiency or the

glory of the millions of brave men who laid down their lives on the battlefield.

Suppose that England had had no navy, or one so small that Germany could cripple or evade it. Suppose if you will that the United States, instead of Great Britain, had been the first ally of France.

Instead of landing millions of men on French soil without loss as England did first, and we later, the task of furnishing any military aid would have been almost insurmountable. German battleships and cruisers would have been there to be dealt with, in addition to the stealthy submarines. Even if the German navy were defeated in battle it could hardly be without inflicting crippling wounds on the victor, and one or two German raiders afloat would have put an abrupt check to the ferriage of troops.

Had Germany not been confronted by an overwhelming naval power there would have been not enough munitions in the Allied lines during the first two years of the war. It is a matter of history that much of the success of the rush of von Kluck upon Paris in 1914 was due to the scarcity of munitions in the French and British lines, while it was to the same suicidal lack that was due their failure to crush the enemy after his defeat by Joffre at the Marne. Not until the host of munition factories in the United States, working night and day, began turning out shells, shrapnel, TNT, gunpowder, rifles and arms of every sort and kind were the Allied armies able to withstand the German on-

slaught. But if the power of the British navy had not assured reasonably safe transport across the ocean for these munitions of war Germany could have overrun Europe, and done her will upon civilization.

These are facts that it will be well for the people of the United States to keep clearly in mind as year after year the temptation grows to cut down in time of peace the appropriation for the navy. In time perhaps the common sense of nations will lead to a general movement for the limitation of navies. Perhaps in due season the League of Nations, about which after the late war political controversy raged so fiercely, may be developed to the point of ending all wars. But that time is still far distant. Until it shall arrive no nation with the widely extended coast line of the United States, no nation with colonial possessions separated from the mother country by thousands of miles of sea can afford to be without adequate naval force. More than once we have owed safety to the friendship of Great Britain and the power of her navy. But it is not well to be too sure that international friendships will endure forever.

END

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: MAY 2001

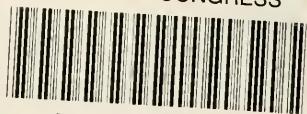
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